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No. 453

AUTUMN.

BY ANNIE WILTON.

Bright Summer has sounded her last reveille,
And faded as fadeth all beautiful things;
But oh, my heart loveth to cherish her still,
Even though shadows have tarnished her wings.
I see her troop off with a bird and a flower,
As the Troubadour hastes to his Lady Love's bow-
er.

Two sisters have parted. Hush! hear their adieu!
Their paths now diverging, no more will they
meet,
Till Summer shall summon her beautiful Muse,
And Autumn to Winter resteth her seat.
Now reigns she o'er harvesting hearts everywhere,
Like a matron grown thoughtful and flushed with
her care.

How choice are the treasures, how numerous the
sails,
Spreading the Ocean's blue boundless expanse;
How nobly our ships out-rideth the gales!
Some unseen hand guideth, it cannot be chance,
Those bright keels gliding, while plowing the waves,
And th' index, perchance, at the deep coral caves.
The kindest thought that can enter the breast,
Is the blessed forecasting for Winter by all;
This feathering and filling one's beautiful nest
Is answering for mortals Humanity's call.
It will open the gates where no Winters abound,
And Summer celestial, no reveille will sound.

A Wild Girl; OR, LOVE'S GLAMOUR.

A Romance of Brooklyn Heights.

BY CORINNE CUSHMAN,
AUTHOR OF "BLACK EYES AND BLUE," "PRET-
TY AND PROUD," "BRAVE BARBARA," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DROMIOS.

Look on this picture, then on this—SHAKESPEARE.
DUKE. One of these men is genius to the other;
And so of these: which is the natural man,
And which the spirit? Who deciphers them?

DRO. S. I, sir, am Dromio; command him away!
DRO. E. I, sir, am Dromio; pray, let me stay!
—ID.

To Boston to see his cousin Elaine and to try
to probe the mystery of the two counts, Florian
Fenn resolved to go. He was prudent for one
so young, taking his departure on the day fol-
lowing his meeting of the count at Lilia's, with-
out other excuse to her or her parents than his
desire to visit his relatives.

He took a deep interest in the welfare of Kitty
Kanell, not only because she was Lilia's friend,
but on her own account. Kitty had a quality
superior to her beauty, her high spirits or
great expectations—and that was "charm," she
charmed everybody.

Florian realized that it was time the discov-
ery made if there was anything in his dis-
favor to be discovered about the count. To Bos-
ton, therefore, he went, and received a warm
welcome at his uncle's house.

"You have come just in time, cousin, to go
out with me this evening. There is to be a very
brilliant reception at one of my friends," said
Elaine, after she had kissed him.

"Will I meet the Italian count, then?"
"Yes, he is one of the stars. What do you
know about him?"

"Nothing—nothing at all—except what I saw
in the paper you sent me. Perhaps you remem-
ber, Elaine, I never did 'freeze' to these foreign
noblemen. Adventurers, after rich wives, most
of them."

"You cannot say that about Count Cicarini.
His credentials are undoubted. A perfect gentle-
man. Handsome, courtly, with a most dreamy
and romantic air—I'm free to confess to you,
cousin, that I'm more than half in love with him
myself. All the girls just rave over him. He's
perfectly del."

Florian certainly felt an intense curiosity to
meet this delightful person. He hardly realized
what a very nice dinner he sat through, nor
how lovely his cousin Elaine looked as she float-
ed down-stairs in a trailing rosy cloud of satin
and lace.

"How abstracted you are, cousin Florian! It
has just ruined your manners to become en-
gaged. Quit dreaming about your Lilia and de-
vote yourself to me if you please," pouted Elaine,
in the carriage.

"I beg ten thousand pardons, my sweet
cousin. I was not thinking, even of Lilia, but
about some very important business. Is this the
house?"

"Yes, this is the place. Look your handsom-
est, cousin, and do me credit."
In a few moments the cousins—a very hand-
some couple they made—were paying their re-
spects to the host and hostess. Then Florian
was introduced to a dozen pretty girls, but he
could scarcely assume his accustomed air of
graceful devotion, which he wore when in the
presence of pretty women, his thoughts were so
set in another direction.

"Is the count here?" he whispered, as soon as
he could edge around to his cousin's side again.
"He is just entering the room. There he is,
speaking to our hostess."

"As soon as you can bring it about, I wish you
would introduce me."
"I will be in a mind."

Fenn's gaze continued riveted on the gentle-
man who had just arrived, to whom all his new
friends were anxious to show attention. He
might have been the New York Count Cicarini's
double. He was about the same age, or a year
or two older—had the same grave, deep eyes,
olive skin, black mustache and slender figure.
Yet there was also a great difference between
the two men. Florian liked this one even less
than the other.



"Alas, madame, I am no longer Miss Kanell. I was married three hours ago, and have run away from my husband."

It was some time before a person of as small
importance as young Fenn could claim any of
the foreigner's attention.

In the latter part of the evening he contrived
to be introduced.
"I have had the honor of knowing another
Count Cicarini, who has been spending a few
months in Newport, New York and Brooklyn.
Is he a relative of yours?" asked Florian.

"Another Count Cicarini?"
The words were spoken as by a man in a
dream.

"Yes, a Count Carlo Cicarini."

A mortal paleness overspread the dark beauty
of the foreigner's face.

"Come with me into the recess," he said, as
soon as he could speak, leading the way into the
curtained nook of a bay-window. "Tell me
more of this. The man is an impostor."

His own face was turned from the light, his
hands trembled.
"An impostor?"

"He must be. I am the only heir of my name
and race."

"He has deceived some of our best people,
then. He is engaged to marry a young lady of
wealth and position, in a few weeks. If he has
been imposing upon her and others, the decep-
tion cannot be too quickly made known. To tell
you the truth, count, I came here, seeing your
name in the papers, to meet you and clear up
this mystery, for the sake of the young lady,
whose friend I am."

"Describe this person to me, please."
Florian did as he was requested, giving many
particulars of the other's career in New York.
Before he had finished his companion burst into
a violent laugh.

"Pardon me," he said, as soon as he could
control himself—"it is an exquisite joke! I
could not but laugh. It would seem as if my
double outdid the original. It is too good! I
know the fellow. The demoiselle he is to marry
—you say she is very wealthy, young and beau-
tiful?"

"All three; but a mere child—a girl of six-
teen—too inexperienced to judge of a man's
true character."

"We cannot talk in this crowded place. If
you will be so kind as to do me a great favor,
you will come to my hotel with me. I will ex-
cuse myself in about half an hour, if you are
willing to exchange your brilliant drawing-room
for an interview with me in my room. How
will that be, Signor Fenn?"

"I am quite ready to go with you. I came to
Boston to make your acquaintance, count. I
will see if my cousin can be provided with an-
other escort, and if so, will go with you at any
time."

In another hour the two men were shut up in
the count's sitting-room at the Tremont
House.

When Florian got back to his own bedroom in
his uncle's house, and began, deliberately,
to think over the two hours' interview he had just
come from, he was more bewildered than ever
in his life. He had not been conscious of it
while at the Tremont; yet, on reflection, he
found that the count had gotten from him ev-
ery particular as to his namesake's doings in
New York, the name, residence and peculiar-
ities of Miss Kitty Kanell, her father's business
and home address, the address of the school, and
a hundred other points; while he, Florian, had re-
ceived no convincing proofs to make it apparent
that this was the real count, the other the ad-
venturer.

He has completely hocus-pocussed me, with
his brilliant talk and his insinuating ways.
However, I will see him again in the morning.
It will be easy to settle this matter now. The
impostor will, of course, flee—the real count
stand his ground."

It was growing red in the east when Florian
finally closed his eyes in sleep.

He came down to breakfast, nervous and not
half rested; made little reply to the jesting of
his cousin about the sudden friendship between
him and the Italian, and went off to call on
Cicarini as early as he thought he should be apt
to find him up.

"I may tell you something, on my return
from the Tremont, that will make you open
those sleepy brown eyes very wide," he remark-
ed to Elaine as he went off.

It was his own brown eyes which opened
wide, however, when, on attempting to send up
his card to the count, at his hotel, he was in-
formed that the Count Cicarini had left very
early that morning.

"Where for?"
"His baggage was checked to Philadelphia.
We believe he is on his way to Washington."

"Was not his departure very abrupt?"
"We did not know, yesterday, of his inten-
tion to leave Boston. His rooms were engaged
to the end of the month."

"Well," said Florian, confidentially to himself,
as he went out of the hotel and stood on the pav-
ement, looking as if he had lost his way. "Well!
it is more impossible than ever to tell of other
from which. I must make my apologies to
pant Appleton, hurry back to New York, and
put the police on the track of both of them."

When Florian did reach his Brooklyn home,
he was met with the information that Kitty
Kanell had run away from school, and that it
was inferred she had gone with Count Cicarini,
as that nobleman had disappeared, bag and
baggage, from his boarding-place on Fifth
avenue.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BRIDE'S FLIGHT.

"But where is she now, this night of joy?"
"Dainty maid of high degree,
What has the beggar to do with thee?
Thy life is not mine, and love is May,
What has the beggar to thee to say?"

It was ten o'clock of the same evening on
which Kitty Kanell had run away from the
Sacred Heart.

In a small, plainly-furnished sitting-room on
the second floor of one of those little old-fash-
ioned wooden dwellings which still stand on
Pineapple street, were a mother and son.

The latter had just come in from the street;
snow clung to the threadbare overcoat which he
removed as he entered.

"I am sorry you had to go out such a night,
Philip. Did you find Mr. Kanell at home?"
"Yes, mother."

The tone of his voice made the lady look up
quickly.
"What is the matter, Philip? Do not tell me
that you have lost the situation!" speaking with
evident alarm.

"No, mother, not so bad as that."
The young fellow began walking up and down
the floor.

His mother watched him with evident uneas-
iness.
He was a magnificent-looking young man of
two or three and twenty, handsome in form and
manly in expression. The shabbiness of his
well-brushed clothes could not detract from his
beauty.

"Mother, mother!" he cried, after a few mo-
ments of restless tramping through the narrow
limits of the room. "Why is it that some must
feast to surfeit on all the good things of life
while others starve for a crust? Look at you,
mother, a lady, once the ruler of a circle of your
own—your fashionable friends have forgotten
your existence; they do not remember your face
when they meet you on the street. Look at
me! I must bind all my fiery, eager desires
within the meager boundaries of my thousand-
a-year salary. Oh, if it had been different!

Oh, if I had dared to 'put it to the test, to lose
or win it all! Mother, Kitty Kanell has run
away from school with that foreign count, of
whom I was telling you."

"Where did you hear that?"
"At her father's house. When I went there
with the papers I found Mr. Kanell in a sad
state of mind. A Sister had just been there to
inform him of his daughter's disappearance and
to place in his hand the note she had left pinned
to her books, telling them 'not to bother to
look for her—she should be a bride within an
hour.'"

"She was always a wild thing. I am not sur-
prised."
"She was a lovely, witching, wayward crea-
ture, mother."

"A harum-scarum, slangy, high-tempered
little thing, Philip, if she was Dudley Kanell's
daughter."

"Mother, do not say a word against her! I
cannot bear it."

The lady looked at her son in mute surprise.
"I love her—I love her! I have loved her
ever since the day I first set eyes upon her, when
she was twelve and I eighteen. To me she is
everything that is good, lovely, wonderful,
charming. If I had been rich—if I had had the
ghost of a chance—there is not a man on earth
should have gotten her away from me. What
was the use? A poor clerk in her father's bank
—no friends—no prospects. All I could do was
to long for her from afar. I do not suppose she
is any more than barely aware of my existence,
yet she has not been out of my thoughts one mo-
ment since."

"Philip, Philip! I am sorry for you."
"Oh, mother, she was so sweet! I would
have died for one kiss given freely by her dear
lips. There is no other girl in the world like
Miss Kanell!"

"My poor, foolish boy!"
"She never spoke to me but three times. I
knew, all the time, that I was mad—insane! I
could not help it. You might as well have
advised the sun not to shine as me not to love her.
Do you remember the day she came here with
the 'basket of peaches'? You were ill—it was
last July—and she happened to hear me telling
her father about it, and came with the fruit
that afternoon. I had come home early to take
care of you. How shy and sweet and timid she
was about it! I made her blush I looked at her
so. Wild! yes, she was wild. I liked her the
better for that. Oh, mother, my heart is break-
ing. Laugh, scoff, pity, as you will, mother, I
tell you my heart will break."

He threw himself down in a chair, leaned his
arms on the table, his head on his arms, and
burst into deep, slow sobs. His pale, pretty
mother—a hopeless invalid to whom this good
son devoted himself as few sons would—cried si-
lently as she heard and saw his grief.

It was the first she had ever dreamed that
Philip had lifted his eyes to his employer's beau-
tiful daughter.

He had enough to endure, poor boy, without
that trouble.

The Armorys had once been as rich as the
Kanells; but the father's ship had gone down in
the faithless seas of speculation—he had gone
down with his fortune—committed suicide—and
left his delicate wife and young son to do the
best left to them after such a disaster.

Mrs. Armory sat silent and distressed for some
little time. She made an effort to arouse
Philip from his fit of despair.

"Why should Miss Kanell have run away to
marry the count? Are there objections to his
character? Did not her father approve?"

"I know none of the particulars. I was in
the library speaking with him on business when
the Sister came in hurriedly, and, in their agi-
tation, they discussed the matter openly. I
could not avoid hearing what was said. I know
Mr. Kanell was very angry, for he swore a
great oath—a thing I never heard him do be-

fore. He said that the count had broken his
word of honor."

"I am sorry, indeed, if she has rushed into
marriage with a man capable of that."
"Hark! mother. The bell rung, and now
some one is coming up here to us. Perhaps Mr.
Kanell wants me."

Philip started to his feet as he spoke. The
next moment, a quick, low, nervous knock
sounded on the door. Mrs. Kanell opened it,
and there stood a shivering female figure, wrap-
ped in a blue waterproof cloak and hood, whiten-
ed with the great flakes of moist snow which
clung to it.

"Come in. Who is it?"
The unknown visitor stepped in, closing the
door quickly, with a backward glance over her
shoulder, as if she feared or expected pursuit,
and turned the key in the lock.

Then she threw off her cloak, betraying the
slim figure, the pretty brown head, the great
blue eyes of Miss Kanell.

Kitty's face was white as the snow outside,
her hair fell down about it in damp, ruffled
masses, her blue eyes glittered with strange, fe-
verish excitement.

Philip made no sound, standing staring at her
as if a specter had arisen out of the floor to con-
front him.

Mrs. Armory, in extreme surprise, stood
speechless.

"May I stay here to-night?" gasped Kitty,
after a minute. "Oh, you must not refuse me,
Mrs. Armory. This was the only place I could
think of where I would not be looked for, yet
where I would feel quite safe and protected."

"What has happened, Miss Kanell, that you
come here?"
"Alas, madame, I am no longer Miss Kanell.
I was married three hours ago, and I have run
away from my husband."

Mrs. Armory looked her wonder at the pant-
ing fugitive.

"Of course you think it strange," ran on Kit-
ty, wildly. "It is strange—stranger to me
than anybody else! I am a willful, wicked girl,
I expect; and am punished for it already. It is
my fate to run away," she added, bursting into
hysterical laughter. "I had no sooner run
away from the convent to get married than I
ran away from the one I ran away with! Yet
I am not crazy, Mrs. Armory! I am in my so-
ber senses now—whatever I was before—and I
tell you I would not have that man find me, to-
night, for all the money my mother left me. If
he should have been on my track—if he comes
here for me—you must hide me from him. Prom-
ise me that you will hide me, if he comes for
me," she pleaded, catching Mrs. Armory's
hands and looking piteously into her face.

"Yes, yes, my poor child. Calm yourself.
But why do you not go home to your father?
He is your proper protector."

"I was afraid to go to papa. He is so dread-
fully angry at me, you see. And then, that will
be the first place where the count will look for
me. He has the right to demand of papa to give
me up. I am his wife. He will never let me
go if he once gets hold of me; since it is my
money he is after. Papa will say to me—
'You married him against my advice—go with
him!—go with him—I wash my hands of you.'
Ah, let me stay here!"

A blast of wind rattled
at shutters and door, causing Kitty to give a
low cry and cling to Mrs. Armory.

"You are nervous, my dear child. Compose
yourself. You shall remain with me as long as
you wish, and I will do all I can for your safety
and comfort. Sit down here and let me make
you a cup of tea."

"If you please," shivered Kitty, as her host-
ess drew her toward a comfortable rocking-
chair.

Then, for the first time, as Mrs. Armory went
about setting the tea to draw on the little stove
which warmed the room, Kitty, settling back
in the chair and glancing about, met the gaze
of Philip Armory which had never left her
face.

She blushed scarlet.
"I had forgotten about you," she said sim-
ply.

"Ay!" thought Philip, drearily, "I am no
more to her than the floor beneath her feet."
Perhaps this consciousness angered him. He
said to her, sternly:

"How dare you promise, before God, to love
and honor a man, to be his wedded wife, and
then, before the day is past, play him a trick
like this? It seems to me strange fooling with
the sacred things of life. I knew you were wild
and willful, but I did not think you fickle and
false."

"Philip!" exclaimed his mother, "is this a
time to judge of her actions? Let us wait."

"Thank you, madame," said Kitty, with a
new, indescribable dignity which made her
lovelier than ever to the man who worshipped
her very shadow yet had dared to find biter
fault with her. "I will be able, I hope, by
morning, to explain myself, partially, at least.
I have been foolish—headstrong. I deserve pun-
ishment. Perhaps your son's criticism on my
conduct is none too severe. I shall be punished
thoroughly—God knows that came soon enough!
A wretched life I shall be punished for so folly.
All my life—and I am only a very little more
than sixteen."

Tears rushed into Philip's eyes as she uttered
these last words in such a hopeless voice. He
felt like a brute, as he furtively watched the
pale little face leaning back wearily against the
cushioned chair, with closed eyes and large
drops falling from the long, curved lashes.

A great rage against the man who had made
her unhappy took the place of the burning jeal-
ousy which had devoured him. He set his teeth
together as he thought:

"If that dastard has injured her in any way I
will have it out of him!"

Strange medley of human motives and feel-
ings! A sense of happiness stole over the heart
of Philip Armory as soon as he had imagined
himself called on to take the place of this girl's
protector. To be able to avenge any slight or
wrong done to her would atone for all he had
endured in knowing himself less to her than the
dust under her feet.

During the sleepless night which followed, the
young bank-clerk performed over and over, in
his imagination, the part of a hero, called to serve
the woman he adored.

CHAPTER IX.
THE GARDEN TRAGEDY.

There comes a black gondola slowly
To the palace in festive hours;
And the Count Rinaldo Rinaldi
Has mounted the black marble stair.
There rustles a robe of white satin;
There's a footstep falls light by the stair;
There rustles a robe of white satin;
There's a gleam of soft golden hair,
And the lady, Irene Riccaoli,
Stands by the cypress tree there.

—OWEN MERRITT.

COUNT CARLO CICALINI was one of the gayest young nobles in the Grand Canal, and his city of the sea, that glazes forever, like Narcissus, pensively at her own loveliness, mirrored in the mysterious water. It is still a city of passionate hearts, warm pulses, and strange romance. Not a foot of the faintly-glimmering canals but is thickly strewn with records of love and crime.

Count Cicalini was a bachelor, rich, light-hearted and happy—that is, he would have been happy if one episode of his gay life had not chilled and clouded those festive hours which followed after; but who still enjoyed keeping house, as unmarried men do who set up their own establishment. He rented, for a ridiculously low sum, nearly the whole of a gloomy old palace looking down the Grand Canal. He brightened up some of the rooms with modern pictures, quaint china and costly rugs. He chose one of the great apartments for a dining-room, hanging it with marvelous old tapestries, and here, with accompaniment of lovely flowers and music, he delighted to entertain other gentlemen of similar tastes; nor was he exclusive in the choice of his guests. Artists were always his friends, particularly American artists; he loved their wit and originality. He would have a duke on the twelfth century—on the other, a promising young poet, or a gifted painter.

The count was a great favorite with the grand ladies of Venice. No other complete if toward accident kept Cicalini away. He was gay, but he was not dissipated; certainly, not dissolute. The death of his parents had given him full liberty at an early age; yet, though extravagant, he was not a spendthrift.

Ever since he had come into the control of his property he had kept by him a young man of about his own age as his business agent. It would be difficult to exactly define Alberto's duties and position. When his employer traveled he acted as courier; he was not a valet, his duties were not menial, yet, in case of necessity, he would do anything that offered. He kept the accounts, managed the income, warned his master when he was going beyond it, was a friend and companion when he was alone, but never presumed beyond a servant's deference when others were present. Carlo confided all his affairs to him, both of the head and heart, consulted him about his list of guests and the menu for a supper, and poured into his discreet ear matters more delicate. Brothers could not have been more confidential than the count and his agent.

It came about, at last, after three or four years of pleasant trifling, dividing his time between Venice and some of the fashionable cities of France, that Count Cicalini fell desperately in love. His passion was a most unfortunate one, and to aid him in overcoming it, Alberto advised him to take a long tour. The count retorted, peevishly, that he was weary of traveling and had seen everything.

"But you have not been across the Atlantic. Why not go to the United States? That might amuse you, my lord."

And, after several weeks of persuasion, the young nobleman began to make preparations for a visit to that wild, foreign country—"the United States, in the city of New York," where so many talented artists came from; that is, he left Alberto to make the preparations, while he remained plunged in a gloom so deep and unyielding that Alberto really feared that something desperate might occur if he did not speedily go away.

It will not surprise those who know how such things are managed in Italy to be told that the lady with whom Carlo was so madly infatuated, was married. She was very young, very beautiful, and forced, by her family, into a political marriage with a duke fifty years of age, actively engaged in affairs of state.

Nor was Carlo so much to blame for falling in love with the duchess, since she had first allowed him to see that she was deeply interested in him. Yet he struggled manfully against the current which was bearing him to destruction. Feeling that such a course would make him utterly wretched, he yet consented to leave the place which had such a terrible charm for him, placing himself under Alberto's guidance. Firmly resolved to protect his own integrity and that of the unhappy girl who had been made the victim of family ambition, he even urged his agent to hasten his preparations for quitting Venice.

The letters of introduction we have previously referred to had been obtained, letters of credit made ready, passports procured, baggage packed, and farwells spoken to many friends, when the count received a ticket of invitation to a ball and garden fete to be given by the duke the evening previous to Carlo's intended departure. His very soul was shaken by the temptation to accept the invitation, and thus have the wreck of pleasure of again seeing and speaking to the duchess.

In vain Alberto pointed out to him the folly of yielding to this wish, begging him to remain at home nor incur the shock to his own peace, of again meeting the woman he hopelessly adored.

For once Carlo was obstinate, violent, would not hear to reason. He seemed to live only in a dream until the hour arrived when he dressed to go to the duke's ball. Then he became rashly gay, and set out, in his gondola, in such extravagant spirits that Alberto felt very uneasy. He grew more and more restless as the hours passed. He was afraid his master would be guilty of some indiscretion which would draw down upon him the suspicion or the vengeance of the duke.

And now a few words about Alberto before we go on with the history of the night's adventures. His mother had been a handsome peasant who brought fruit to the Venetian market; she was too ignorant even to know how to read; but her son early evinced a spirit and ambition quite out of keeping with his humble condition. The older Count Cicalini had noticed his brightness and taken upon himself the expense of the boy's education, whom he had placed with the monks, with an idea, probably, of having him choose the priesthood. At his patron's death Alberto had appealed to the young count to take him into his employment, saying that he detested the idea of becoming a priest. Carlo took a fancy to the young fellow, and granted his prayer. Some close observers, of suspicious temper, had remarked a strong likeness between master and man, hinting that this accounted for the late count's interest in the poor boy; but Carlo had never heard these hints, nor had the idea he obscurely expressed ever come into his mind.

He had noticed, himself, that Alberto resembled him. Both were of slender, elegant build, dark-haired and dark-eyed. If Alberto knew, to a certainty, anything peculiar about his origin, he kept his knowledge to himself. In the monastery he had not only been taught many languages, but he had picked up some accomplishments—could sing exquisitely in a pure tenor voice, and play the piano.

That evening, after his master had foolishly yielded to the temptation to gaze into the dark eyes of Laura once more, Alberto felt a presentiment that evil would come of it. He was impelled by some inward power to go after the count, whose gondola not returning, Alberto went out and signaled another boatman.

The dark water of the Grand Canal was jeweled with fitful starlight as the gondoller pulled his boat easily along the path to the duke's palace.

Arrived at the marble stairs which led down into the water from the grand building where the ball was going on, Alberto did not know what next to do. Yet it was impressed upon him that he ought to do something.

Several gondolas were anchored near at hand, waiting to be summoned, for the hour had passed midnight. Long columns of golden light lay across the tremulous water, stretching from the illuminated windows. Delicious music, rising and falling with rhythmic beat, palpitated on the cool night air, while the shadows of stately men and jeweled women kept time in the dance as they fell athwart the windows.

Alberto knew that the garden behind the palace was also illuminated for the occasion, though a high stone wall guarded it jealously from the gaze of passers-by on the canal. He knew, also, that a side canal led past the garden, and that there was another flight of steps there, leading from a door in the side wall of the garden.

Something hid him. They did not notice there and wait. He spoke to the boatman in a low voice, who turned his gondola into the cross-canal and moored it at the other landing.

There all was darkness and gloom. There were few or no windows on that side of the palace; a faint light from the illumination within streamed over the high wall, but the water itself looked black, except where the stars sparkled on its surface.

There was music in the garden, too; sweet laughter, a faint melody, occasionally reaching the alert ear of the watcher. The gondoller fell sound asleep. Alberto stepped lightly from the boat, went up the steps and opened the door in the wall. He thought if he saw the count in the garden, he would tell him how his gondola waited there. His heart throbbed heavily with unaccountable excitement.

All had been silence for the last half-hour in the garden. The guests were evidently departing. When Alberto peeped in he saw no one. He opened the door little by little, and slipped into a dim alley, bordered with thick foliage of flowering shrubs. The colored lamps were many of them burning low—the music had ceased.

He strayed on until he found himself in a lovely nook, some distance from the palace. A marble statue of Psyche gleamed whitely under thick drooping trees, of a green that was almost black.

A fountain played in the center of a green plat. The falling water plashed softly into a marble basin. By this basin stood two persons. The light was very dim in this secluded place, but Alberto knew, in a moment, who the pair was, standing there together, looking despairingly at one another.

They only looked at each other with passion and misery in their bright eyes. The lady's white satin dress made her appear like one of the statues placed about. The diamonds in her gold hair glittered like fire-flies. The sweet face was white as death.

"Laura," murmured the count, "farewell!" It was all he said. He did not even attempt to touch the hand she half held out to him.

Then Alberto saw what the hapless lovers did not see, gave a cry of warning, and sprang to save his master. He was too late. The point of the jealous duke had pierced the count's back, who fell forward without a moan or struggle. The duchess remained speechless with horror. The duke, in his rage, did not even perceive there was a witness to his deed. He caught up the body of his rival, dragged it by the shoulders along the alley of orange-flowers and rushed until he came to the door in the wall; then, without pausing to rest, inspired by fury with a giant's strength, he jerked the count through, and the next instant, Alberto, paralyzed with the shock, heard the dull splash in the canal which told what had been done to the sudden crime from human eyes.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 451.)

A Word Regretted.

BY MATTIE DYER BRITTS.

AMID the perfume of tuberose, myrtle and orange-blossoms, with the shimmer of white satin, and the soft rustle of silken robes and fluttering fans, Harry Butler and Lucy Gilmore stood before the altar in the stately church, and were made one.

Then a brief trip, a dizzy round of railroad cars, steamboats, hotels and homes, and again, to begin housekeeping in a cozy nest, like a couple of children at play.

Lucy was a famous little manager, and lucky enough to secure a good girl, so everything went on finely as a wedding.

But Lucy had been brought up a petted, only child, spoiled and willful, used to her own way in everything. Harry was quite willing to indulge her in all reasonable whims and fancies, but sometimes his wishes crossed hers, and then he found out that Lucy had a temper of her own—and could give it the reins, too, now and then.

However, these slight storms blew over, and the sun shone all the brighter for them. For when Lucy did come to her senses she was so exceedingly sweet and sorry that Harry could not find it in his heart to scold her.

The grand event of the season was to be a party at Mrs. Judge Parrish's fine mansion, and Harry and Lucy were invited. Harry was not anxious to go. Mrs. Parrish was the name of the "fastest" lady in the city. Harry felt that much of the society she mingled in was objectionable, and not such as he desired his wife to frequent.

But Lucy was wild to go. And thinking he would be with her, Harry consented, and gleefully set about having a dress prepared, the prettiest she could devise.

It had just been brought in on the afternoon before the party, and Lucy was admiring it when Harry returned home.

"Why, what brought you so early?" she cried. "Just look at my dress! Isn't it pretty? Isn't this peach-blossom shade exquisite?"

"Very pretty," confessed Harry, gravely, taking her hands in his. "Would you be very much disappointed if you did not wear it to-night?"

"Would I? Of course I would! But I shall wear it, you know."

"I hope you will not, Lucy, love."

"Why, Harry! What is the matter with you? I thought you would be sure to like it!" and Lucy began to pout.

"I do like it, dear. I'm no judge of such traps, but it looks very pretty indeed to me. But, Lucy, I have suddenly been notified that the next train, for a few days. So you see I can't go to Mrs. Parrish's party with you."

"Oh, Harry! Now that's too bad! Do put off your business till to-morrow. One day won't make any difference."

"One day makes a great difference in business matters, Lucy. The firm have trusted me, and sent me, and I cannot wait even one train. I must be gone in an hour."

"Well, I'm sorry, I'm sure. But I needn't miss the party. I can go with Mrs. Cochran."

Harry drew his little wife near him, and said, gently but firmly: "Lucy, my dear girl, the society at Mrs. Parrish's is not such as I approve of, anyway, and I cannot consent to let you go into it, unattended by your husband. You know, darling, I generally put your wishes and pleasure above everything, but this time I ask you not to go to that party while I am gone."

Lucy knew that when Harry said that tone, there was no rebelling. She burst into tears and sobbed like the spoiled child she was.

"That's always the way! I never can do anything I want to! I wish I had never got married!"

"Lucy!" Harry's tone was sad and reproachful.

"I do! Go along, to Boston, or where you please! I never want to see you again!"

"Lucy! Do you mean what you say?"

Lucy's temper had the reins now. She answered, hotly:

"Yes, I do! I wish you was out of my sight forever, and then I could do as I please! Just go, I don't care!"

"Lucy, if you wish it, I can go. But if once I do, it will not be to come back. Think before you decide."

Seven minutes went by, and Harry was still standing there, waiting for the hour had passed midnight. Long columns of golden light lay across the tremulous water, stretching from the illuminated windows. Delicious music, rising and falling with rhythmic beat, palpitated on the cool night air, while the shadows of stately men and jeweled women kept time in the dance as they fell athwart the windows.

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Without stopping to wonder why this was, Lucy fell on her knees, and flung her arms around him, sobbing out:

"Oh, Harry! My darling, darling, I have got you at last!"

"Did you want me, Lucy?" asked a feeble voice.

"Oh, yes! yes! Always! Oh, Harry, don't die! Live and forgive me for those cruel words! I never meant them, Harry, never! Do forgive me!"

"If I do, may I come back to you, and live with and love you?"

"Yes! Yes! A thousand times! Oh, Harry, don't die! Don't leave me again!"

"Well, I guess I won't," exclaimed that young scamp, springing to his feet and clasping Lucy in his arms, where she almost fainted again with surprise.

"But, Harry, haven't you been sick?" she asked.

"Yes, a few days. Not very badly, though."

"But the dispatch said you were very low."

"Well, didn't you find me so on the floor? I couldn't get any lower, you see. It was a ruse, Lucy, with Doctor Preston's help, to bring you to me. Won't you forgive it, dear, and let us be happy again?"

Poor little Lucy had suffered too much to refuse. She forgave him. And when she went home, with Harry and her father, nobody was so happy as Lucy, unless it was Lucy's husband.

GOOD-BY!

BY WM. W. LONG.

The day drifts by and fades away—
The sunset, saddest autumn day.
So sweet because I love you so—
So sad, because from me you go.

Yes, from my side you drift away,
As clouds drift onward o'er the bay.

Oh! kiss me! let me clasp your hand,
While yet the sunlight fills the land!

The Lamb and the Wolf;
OR,

The Heiress of Llangorren Court.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID.

AUTHOR OF "SPECTER BARQUE," "TRACKED TO DEATH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.

A FATAL STEP.

HAVING passed out through the gate, Rogier turns along the wall; and, proceeding at a brisk pace to where it ends in an angle, there comes to halt.

On the same spot where about an hour before stopped Mary Morgan for a different reason. She paused to consider which of the two ways she would take; he has no intention of taking either, or getting a step further. He is not sure which of the two routes he will return by—and for him to proceed along either would be to risk the chance of not meeting her at all.

But that he has some idea of the way she will come, with some suspicion of why and what is delaying her, he has no doubt.

"Morbieu! over an hour since she set out! A tortoise could have crawled to the Ferry and crept back within the time! For a demoiselle with limbs lithe and supple as hers—pah! It can't be the brute that's the obstruction."

Nothing of the kind. Corked, capped, wrapped, ready for delivery—in all two minutes, or at most three! She is so ready to run for it, too—herself proposed going! Odd, that, to say the least. Only understandable on the supposition of something pressing.

An assignment with the River Triton, for sure! Yes; he's the anchor that's been holding her—holds her still. Likely, they're somewhere under the shadow of that wood, now—standing—sitting—ah! I wish I knew the spot; I'd bring their billing and cooing to an abrupt termination. It will not do for me to go on guesses; I might miss the straying damsel with whom this night I want a word in particular—must have it. Monsieur Coracle sent to the service required of him. To ensure an interview with her it is necessary to stay on this spot, however trying to patience."

For a minute he stands motionless, though all the while active in thought, his eyes also restless. These, turning to the wall, show him that

it is overgrown with ivy. A massive cluster on its crest projects out, with hanging tendrils, whose tops almost touch the ground. Behind them there is ample room for a man to stand upright, and so he conceals from the eyes of any one passing, however near.

"Grace! Dieu!" he exclaims, observing this; "the very place. I must take her by surprise. That's the best way when one wants to learn how the cat jumps! *Hai! cette chat! Tom!* how very opportune his mischievous doings—for mademoiselle! Well, I must give *madame la mere* credit for better guard against such accidents hereafter; and how to behave when they occur."

He has by this ducked his head, and stepped under the arched overgreen. The position is on the canal beside it. It gives him a view of both ways by which on that side the farm-house can be approached. The cart lane is directly before his face, as is also the footpath when he turns toward it. The latter leading, as already said, along a hedge to the orchard's bottom, there crosses the brook by a plank—this being about fifty yards distant from where he stationed himself. And as there is now moonlight he can distinctly see the frail footbridge, with a portion of the path beyond, where it runs through straggling trees, before entering the thicker wood. Only at intervals has he sight of it, as the sky is mottled with masses of cloud, that every now and then, drifting over the moon's disk, shut off her light with the suddenness of a lamp extinguished.

When she shines he can himself be seen. Standing in crouched attitude with the ivy tendrils festooned over his pale, bloodless face, he looks like a gigantic spider behind its web, on the wall for prey—ready to spring forward and seize it.

For half ten minutes he thus remains watching, all the while impatiently chafing. He listens, too; though with little hope of hearing ought to indicate the approach of her expected. Just as the priest in listless chagrin is promising himself to be patient, suddenly and altogether withdrawing his thoughts from Mary Morgan. It is a form approaching the plank, or the opposite side of the stream; not hers, nor a woman's; instead the figure of a man! Neither erect nor walking in the ordinary way, but with head held down and shoulders projected forward, as he were seeking concealment under the bushes that beset the path, for all drawing night to the brook with the rapidity of one pursued, and who thinks there is safety only on the other side!

"*Sainte Vierge!*" exclaims the priest, *soito voce*. "What can all that mean? And who—?"

He stays his self-asked interrogatory, seeing that the skulker has paused, too—at the further end of the plank, which he has now reached. Why? It may be from fear to set foot on it; for indeed is there danger to one not intimately acquainted with it? The man may be a stranger—some fellow or two who intend trying the hospitality of the farm-house—more likely its hen-roosts, judging by his manner of approach.

While thus conjecturing, Rogier sees the skulker stoop down, immediately after hearing a sound, different from the sough of the stream; a harsh, grating noise, as of a piece of heavy timber drawn over a rough surface of rock.

"Sharp follow!" thinks the priest: "with all his haste, wonderfully cautious! He's fixing the thing steady before venturing to tread upon it! Ha! I'm wrong; he doesn't design crossing it after all!"

This as the crouching figure erects itself and, instead of passing over the plank, turns abruptly away from it. Not to go back along the path, but up the stream on that same side! And with bent body as before, still seeming desirous to shun observation.

Now more than ever mystified, the priest watches him, with eyes keen as those of a cat set for nocturnal prowling. Not long till he learns who the man is. Just then the moon, escaping from a cloud, flashes her full light in his face, revealing features of diabolic expression from the spot where he has been spilling blood!

Rogier recognizes Coracle! Dick, though still without the slightest idea of what the poacher is doing there.

"*Que diantre!*" he exclaims, in surprise; "what can that devil be after? Coming up to the plank and not crossing—? Ha! yonder's a very different sort of pedestrian approaching!"

"*Mausselle Mary at last!*"

Thus as the same intermittent gleam of moonlight he describes a straw hat, with streaming ribbons, over the tops of the bushes beyond the brook.

The brighter image drives the darker one from his thoughts; and, forgetting all about the man in his resolve to take the woman unawares, he steps out from under the ivy, and makes forward to meet her. He is a Frenchman, and to help her over the footpath will give him a fine opportunity for displaying his cheap gallantry.

As he hastens down to the stream, the moon remaining unclouded, he sees the young girl close to it on the opposite side. She approaches with proud carriage, and confident step, her cheeks even under the pale light showing red-flushed with the kisses so lately received, as it were, clinging to them. Her heart yet thrilling with love, strong under its excitement, little suspects she how soon it will cease to beat.

Boldly she plants her foot upon the plank, believing, late boasting, a knowledge of its tricks. Alas! there is one, with which she is not acquainted—could not be a new and treacherous one, taught it within the last two minutes.

The daughter of Evan Morgan is doomed; one more step will be her last in life!

She makes it, the priest alone being witness. He sees her arms flung aloft, simultaneously hearing a shriek; then arms, body, and head sink out of sight suddenly, as though the earth had swallowed them!

CHAPTER XXIII.

A SUSPICIOUS WAIF.

ON returning homeward the young waterman betinks him of a difficulty—a little matter to be settled with his mother. Not having gone to the shop, he has neither whippersnort nor pitch to show. If questioned about these commodities, what answer is he to make? He dislikes telling her mother lie. It came easy enough before the interview with his sweetheart, but now it is not so much worth while.

On reflection he thinks it will be better to get a clean breast of it. He has already half-confessed, and may as well admit his mother to full confidence about the secret he has been trying to keep from her—unsuccessfully, as he now knows.

While still undetermined, a circumstance occurs to hinder him from longer withholding it, whether he would or not. In his abstraction he has forgotten all about the moon, now up, and at intervals shining brightly. During one of these he has arrived at his own gate, as he opens it seeing his mother on the doorstep. Her attitude shows she has already seen him, and observed the direction whence he has come. Her words declare the same.

"Why, Jack!" she exclaims, in feigned astonishment, "ye beent a-comin' from the Ferry that way?"

The interrogatory, or rather the tone in which it is put, tells him the cat is out of the bag. No use attempting to stuff the animal in again; and seeing it is well, he rejoins, laughingly:

"Well, mother, to speak the truth, I ha'n't been to the Ferry at all. An' I must ask you to forgive me for practicin' a trifle o' deception on ye—that 'bout the Mary wantin' repairs."

"I suspected it, lad; an' that wor the t'other Mary as wanted something, or you wanted

somethin' wi' her. Since you've spoke repentant, I ain't a-goin' to worry ye about it. I'm glad the boat be all right, as I ha' got good news for you."

"What?" he asks, rejoiced at being so easily let off.

"Well; you spoke truth when ye said there was no knowin' but that somebody might be wantin' to hire ye any mornin'. There's been one already."

"Who? Not the captain?"

"No, not him. But a grand livery chap; footman or coachman—I ain't sure which—only that he came frae a Squire Powell's, 'bout a mile back."

"Oh, I know Squire Powell—him o' New Hall, I suppose it be. What did the sarvant say?"

"That if ye wasn't engaged, his young master wants ye to take hisself, and some friends that be stayin' wi' him, for a row down the river."

"How far did the man say? If they be bound to Chepstow or even to Tintern, I don't think I could go; unless they start Monday mornin'."

"I'm 'gaged to the captain for Thursday, ye know; an' if I went the long trip, there'd be all the bother o' gettin' the boat back—an' bare time."

"Monday! Why, it's the morrow they want ye."

"Sunday! That's queerish, too. Squire Powell's family be a sort o' strict religious, I've heard."

"That's just it. The livery chap said it be a church they're goin' to; of the beverage; for old worshipin' places, that lie in a bend o' the river, where carriages ha' difficulty in gettin' to it."

"I think I know the one, an' can take them there well enough. What answer did you g've to the man?"

"That ye could take 'em, an' would. I knowed ye hadn't any other bespeak; and since it wor to a church wouldn't mind its bein' Sunday."

"Sartinly not. Why should I?" asks Jack, who is anything but a Sabbatarian. "Where do they wish the boat to be took? Or am I to wait for 'em here?"

"Yes; the man spoke o' them comin' here, an' at a very early hour, 'bout six o'clock. He says the clergyman be a friend o' the family, and they're to ha' their breakfasts wi' him, afore goin' to church."

"All right! I'll be ready for 'em, come as early as they may."

"In that case, my son, ye better get to your bed at once. Ye've had a hard day o' it, and need rest. Should ye like take a drop o' some-thin' 'fores ye lie down?"

"Well, mother, I don't mind. Just a glass o' your elderberry."

She opens a cupboard, brings forth a black bottle, and fills him a tumbler of the dark red wine—home-made, and by her own hands.

Quaffing it, he observes:

"

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 16, 1878.

98 WILLIAM ST., NEW YORK.

ns, saucepans, strainers, sieves, etc., spice-boxes, catch-safes, jelly-molds, pudding-tins, cake-boxes and coffee caddies, crumb-trays, apple-ers, egg-whisks, muffin-rings, children's trays, life and fork boxes, cake-cutters—any of which will be acceptable to an accomplished housewife.

Unanswered questions on hand will appear next

BY HALCYON GRAY.

At Last!

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

And so, when she heard the rush and roar of rain in the night, and saw the purifying that the storm had done on the morrow, and felt the cool strong wind fresh from the north-west, she asked for the day off she so yearned for, and the

While Hugh Allaire walked on and on, thinking of the days when he had thought himself blessed above all other men because Mabel Ostrand had given her love to him.

There had been an accident to the train by which Hugh Allaire had hurried to his darling—and of the hundreds of passengers he was the only one seriously injured. And when they had found Mabel Ostrand's card in his memorandum-book, they had carried the dying stranger to St. Sulpice's, and so the pitiful romance of one woman's life was ended.

A STORY OF HALLOW-E'EN.

BY ABBIE CLEMENS MORROW.

come into her eyes as she recognized him! How that look had emboldened him to circle her waist with his arm and press kisses upon her red lips and tell her that he loved her. He remembered, oh! how well he remembered, every

his so frankly, know that the story she uttered was false, that she had preferred wealth and a European tour to comparative poverty and a quiet home? He grieved for her as in all those days of his misery he had not grieved for him-

worthy any honest man's devotion, could look into his face believing him false and foul, and yet, in such a solemn moment, and in such awful presence, glory in the guilty love she had won. Every spark of affection or respect he had ever felt for her died out of his heart at that moment. He looked down upon the quiet face of his dead wife and loathed himself and

When Lily was stronger she told him that she had seen the caress he had given Blanche, that the sight of the razor had suggested to her that the renunciation of her life would bring him happiness; that she had bared her arm, and

MY CYNOSURE.

BY A. W. BELLAW.

The Winning Oar;
OR,
THE INNKEEPER'S DAUGHTER.

and sisterly devotion.

NEW ORLEANS," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE QUEEN OF SONG.

In New York the two young men went to the

same hotel, the palatial Fifth Avenue, and after supper they proceeded to the main entrance, and lighting their cigars, joined the throng who were lounging in and around the doorway.

"It is to a great center of the Bohemian world, then, that I am to be introduced?"

"Exactly; and I can assure you, old fellow, that I am offering you a chance worth accepting!" Grahame exclaimed, with a light laugh.

The two friends were strolling along, arm-in-

"This is our destination," he said; "and now, a word before we enter the charmed portal. Supposing that you fall under the spells of this

And as for Bub Lawrence, upon Grahame's whispering in his ear, "Here she is," he had in curiosity turned to see the famous siren, but the moment his eyes fell upon her face he re-echoed

Grahame was the only one of the three that was not completely taken by surprise, although

trusted the wily and smooth-spoken "Harry Gray," although, to save her life, she could not have given good and sufficient reasons for the odd feeling; but women are creatures of instinct; they yield blindly to a whim and do not seek to fortify their actions by logical reasonings.

But Grahame, with a smile "that was childish," replied: "I have thought with you, and I

Again the subtle spells of the charming girl were stealing over him, binding him hand and foot in a silk-like chain, apparently as fragile as the airy web of the spider-king, and yet in

reality as strong as the massive links of the manacled prisoner's chain.

"You are surprised to see me, no doubt," she said, looking straight into his face and smilingly inviting him to approach.

"Yes," he replied, and, unable to resist the charm, he advanced to her side and seated himself so near to her that he had but to reach out his hand to touch her.

"No more surprised, though, than I am to behold you, for you are the very last person in this world that I expected to see."

"But explain this mystery: who and what are you?"

"I am Mademoiselle Paulina, the bright, particular star of the Alhambra Music Hall, in 14th street," she replied, firmly, but with anxious eyes fixed upon the face of the young man, eager to witness the effect of the speech.

"The Alhambra Music Hall?" he murmured.

"Yes, where I nightly sing; I am a vocalist by profession and I command the highest salary given to any artist who treads the boards of a music hall. As you can plainly see, I lead a double life—when I am home with my parents, I am plain Kitty Googage, but here, in New York, over a certain circle I reign as queen, with none to dispute my sway, and I am known as Mademoiselle Paulina."

There was an air of bravado plainly apparent both in the girl's voice and manner. She feared the effects of the disclosure, but she had resolved to make the best of it.

In brief she intimated—I am so and so, I am not ashamed of it, although perhaps you may think that I have cause to be ashamed.

To tell the truth Lawrence hardly knew what to make of the matter. He was so much surprised by the disclosure that he hardly knew what to think. He had not a very high opinion of the "bright particular stars" of the music halls. He had come in contact with two or three of them, and not one of them had impressed him favorably.

"My parents do not know what I am doing," the girl continued, rapidly, determined that he should know the whole story. "They have a holy horror of the stage and all that belongs to it. I assist them out of my earnings, but they would turn from the money in horror if they only knew how I gained it. In fact I really believe that they would rather accept money gained by downright theft than the gains of the stage, as they consider it an abomination."

"How did you happen to enter upon this life?" Bub asked, his curiosity excited.

"Ever since I was a child I had been noted for my excellent voice. I have often been told by good judges that if I had had proper instruction I would have made a great opera singer. My father was in difficulties; his inn was not paying, and he expected to lose it and with it all his little savings which he had invested in it. I resolved to use the talents which Heaven had given me, secretly and unknown to my folks. I made the attempt, and succeeded. The public that I sing to is an easily satisfied monster, my audience do not demand cultivation so much as voice and style, both of which the world says I have. My folks think that I am the foremost of a millinery store on Broadway."

I receive an excellent salary, and that the money I send to them is my surplus earnings. The cheat is not likely to be discovered, for this blonde hair and the glamour of the stage almost defy recognition; and besides, there is no sum of money in this world that would tempt either my father or mother to go inside the walls of a theater."

"This sounds more like a romance than reality," Bub observed, thoughtfully.

"And is all the romance of the world confined to the pages of the novelist?" she exclaimed. "Do not believe it! The mind of man cannot invent wilder deeds than the will of man can perform. The romance of fiction is weak indeed compared to romance of society."

"Yes, that is truth itself."

The appearance of Grahame at this moment interrupted the interview.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 445.)

QUESTIONING.

BY EREN E. REXFORD.

Oh, lips, beneath the grasses gray,
Beneath the dead leaves and the mold,
If you could speak to us to-day,
What strange, weird secrets would be told.
Dear lips that I have often kissed,
Unloose, and answer me to-day,
Or is death's silence like a vast, vast
Which shuts the world and us away?

Oh eyes beneath the dead leaves hid,
I wonder if you cannot see,
Through the soft fringes of your lid,
The blossoms blowing from the bee?
Say, can you see the grasses stir,
Beneath the kisses of the Spring?
Be Nature's true interpreter,
And answer all my questioning.

Oh heart, true heart, where'er I kneel
Between you and the tender sky,
Does not some intense make you feel
That love, who loved you, is no light?
Oh love, love, loved it cannot be,
That you are dead to things of old.
I know you hear and think of me,
Beneath the dead leaves and the mold.

Diamond Cut Diamond.

BY CHARLES D. GARDETTE.

MR. GURLEY flung the newspaper from him and threw himself back in his chair.

"What's the matter, sir?" asked a young lady, who was pouring out Mr. Gurley's coffee.

"Matter? Why, Anna, my friend Harbinger's gone and got married again! At his age! And a widow, too, with a grown-up son! Of course he'll change his will now. Just my luck! Well, if he does he'll perjure himself at the event. The question, then, will be, whether such perjury would not absolve me; but I shall outlive him, without doubt. He's ten years older than I, and married to a widow with a grown-up son. Oh, it's enough to kill him in a twelve-month! Poor Harbinger!"

"But why should he alter his will, uncle?" inquired his niece.

"Do you suppose his wife—with her grown-up son—will allow him to leave his fortune to any one but herself, and her young hopeful? And he hadn't a near relative in the world! His will wronged nobody. Can it be possible that he will prove false to the sacred bond of our early friendship?"

At this moment, Mr. Gurley became conscious that his pretty niece was gazing at him with an expression of inquisitive surprise, and as he did not choose to enter into any further explanation on the subject with her, he resumed his newspaper, and making a temporary barricade of it, silently finished his breakfast behind the frail interposition.

Now, nearly about that very time, John Harbinger, Esquire, sat at his breakfast-table, with his bride and her grown-up son, in a parlor some two hundred miles distant from the residence of his friend, Robert Gurley, Esquire. And although the bride was affable and entertaining, still Mr. Harbinger's face was not altogether unclouded, nor his demeanor that of a thoroughly happy bridegroom.

"Are you not well, my love?" asked the bride, with tender solicitude.

"Can I do anything for you, sir?" added her son, with respectful eagerness.

"No, thank you, Walter. I am quite well, my dear Eunice. I was—only—thinking—"

"Of what, love? Nothing that I may not know, I hope?" queried Mrs. Harbinger, archly.

"Oh, no! that is—I—I was just then thinking—"

"—of my will!"

"Your will, sir?" exclaimed Mrs. H., with a start of graceful horror.

"Your will, sir?" cried Walter, in sorrowful surprise.

"Yes—I—the fact is, my dearest Eunice, I must write to my friend Gurley. I have been strangely forgetful of Gurley."

"Pray, my love," asked Mrs. H., mildly, "who is Mr. Gurley? You have never mentioned him to me before, I think. If he is a friend of yours, why did you not invite him to our—our—"

"There were 'no cards,' you know, my dear Eunice," interrupted her husband, hastily, "and—in fact, my love, I thought—I feared that Gurley—however, I'll write to him immediately. It will be all right, of course."

"What will you write, John, dear, and can you really a most curious little body, and you can't keep any secrets from me, you know; indeed, you can't, John! Walter, your father has something to tell me, and three you know, my son—"

Walter took the hint, and a cigar, and left the room with a smiling "Good-morning."

Thereupon, Eunice came and seated herself upon her dear John's lap, and kissed him right on his somewhat grizzled mustache, and—there being no eavesdroppers at hand, what passed between them cannot be accurately known.

But, on the second day thereafter, Robert Gurley, Esquire, received the following epistle:

EXTON, August 8, 186—

MY DEAR FRIEND—You will, doubtless, have seen my recent marriage with the widow of the late Judge Wynkin, announced in the Exton journals. There were "no cards," or you would, of course, have received them. Our intercourse has been very rare of late years, owing to distance and engrossing occupations, but my dear friend, our friendship has remained unaltered. In my case, it certainly has. I shall write you more fully in a few weeks, but must presently pursue a merely wet you mind at rest, in case you should—as you naturally may—feel any anxiety on the subject with regard to our ancient compact about our wills. Mrs. Harbinger is aware of the nature of this compact, and in the most unselfish and extraordinary spirit of disinterested affection, has begged me to make no change whatever in my testamentary dispositions, unless you positively desire it. She says we are mutually bound in honor to adhere to our agreement, and she voluntarily agrees to absolve each other from its conditions, and that she could not become the means of exercising, as it were, a moral force upon me, upon you, or through me, for the purpose of extorting such mutual absolution. My dear Eunice is the most generous woman in the world, and though the judge died comparatively poor, and Walter (my wife's son) has little or nothing, she feels that she has no right, as she says, to—in short, she desires me to assure you, that, as far as she is concerned, you need feel no anxiety about the will. But, my dear Gurley, on my own part, I may say that, in case I should have a child or children by this marriage—however, I know I may rely upon your generous friendship, and you will let the future take care of itself.

My wife and I both trust, that, if your avocations should permit you to see me, or if you should see us, and bring your charming niece, Miss Meldrick, to whom, pray, present my cordial regards, and believe me, as ever, your sincere friend.

Yours sincerely, JOHN HARBINGER.

When Mr. Gurley had twice read this letter through, he sought his niece in the drawing-room, and said:

"Anna, how would you like to take a trip to Exton? My friend Harbinger invites us to make his bride and himself a visit, and I have reasons for accepting his invitation, and if you have no objections—we can take Newport on our way, if you like, and spend a week there—what do you say?"

"I shall be delighted," exclaimed Anna. "It's dreadfully hot here. When shall we go?"

"Day after to-morrow, if you can get ready."

"Oh, I'll be ready; I've nothing to but to do pack up. How lucky that I've just got my new clothes from Miss Chase, and that lovely hat from Paula's. I shall be ready to go to speak of. A hundred dollars, uncle, will be quite enough to finish my little affairs with."

"Quite enough! Little affairs! I should think so," quoth Mr. Gurley, rather unamiably; "however, there's no use arguing or feuding; down, I suppose, as the money's your own, or will be some day, when your poor old bachelor uncle's gone to clover. So there's the hundred; and we will go by the afternoon train."

II.

Forty-eight hours subsequent to this conversation between uncle and niece, John Harbinger, Esquire, received a letter of the most cordial character from his friend, Robert Gurley, congratulating him on his marriage, offering to do what was agreeable to him in the matter of the will, though suggesting that there was time enough to think about that hereafter, as they were neither of them in any danger of speaking of demise, and concluding by accepting the invitation, of which they proposed to avail themselves in ten days from that date, after passing a week at Newport.

Mr. Harbinger handed this epistle triumphantly to his dear Eunice. She read it carefully, pondered a single instant, said, "Humph! we'll see! I'm glad they're coming," and went out to ride with her dear John and Walter.

The week at Newport was a pleasant one, but, on the whole, monotonous as an incident. On the appointed day, Mr. Gurley and Miss Meldrick arrived at the mansion of the Harbingers, and were welcomed with great cordiality by that family.

They spent a delightful fortnight in each other's society.

The ancient friendship of Messrs. Harbinger and Gurley was wonderfully quickened. They were inseparable, except when temporarily divided by Mrs. Harbinger's comblinal position in the household.

They were as David and Jonathan—David Gurley and Jonathan Harbinger, so to speak.

As to the intercourse between Walter Wynkin and Anna Meldrick—given, a good-looking young fellow of three-and-twenty, and a pretty, piquante damsel of nineteen, and the result is more or less inevitable according to the opportunities. The opportunities of Walter and Anna were capital. And were capital improved.

At the end of the fortnight, Mr. Gurley and his niece tore themselves away.

A group composed of Mrs. Harbinger, her husband, and Walter, stood upon the railway platform to see them off.

"Walter," said Mrs. Harbinger, when about to get into her carriage, "that man's a hypocrite!" (meaning Robert Gurley, Esquire); "I'll talk to Mr. Harbinger."

"I wouldn't, mother," replied her son.

"Anna's a charming girl."

"Very likely; but her uncle wants my husband—"

"Hush! here comes Mr. Harbinger. I've an idea, my dear mother. Don't say a word to your father, but tell me, what you think of—"

"Oh! it will be capital! ha, ha, ha," exclaimed Walter, tickled by his sudden fancy.

Mr. Harbinger approached, and getting into the carriage, the three rode home, lamenting with great sorrow, the loss of the worthy uncle and his charming niece.

As the railway train whirled out of the depot, Mr. Gurley turned to Anna, and said, "Anna, that man's a hypocrite!" (meaning John Harbinger, Esquire). "And he's ruled by his wife."

"Walter is a very clever young man, uncle," quoth Anna, timidly, and not without a blush.

"I've no objection, my dear," replied Mr. G., with a smile. "But Harbinger and his wife both want—they both hope I shall be the first to—"

"Tickets, sir," said the conductor.

After a few moments' silence, Mr. Gurley suddenly broke into a chuckle.

"I'll do it, I'll do it," said he, half to himself.

"The rest of the journey was performed almost in silence, only broken by an occasional chuckle on the part of Mr. Gurley, or a passing remark on the landscape—which was not appreciated by the uncle—on the part of his niece.

They arrived in due time at home.

III.

On the 10th of September, at nine o'clock and five minutes, Mr. John Harbinger, looking out of his breakfast-room window, beheld a young man with a large ledger under his arm pass by. An instant afterward, the door-bell rung.

"It's the water-put, probably, or the gas," said Mr. Harbinger, in reply to a question by Mrs. H.

"Or a bill," muttered Walter.

The parlor door opened.

"A telegram, sir," said the servant; "and the messenger says, you'll be kind enough to write your name and time of receipt in the book," and he handed ledger and envelope to Mr. H.

"I can write it, Walter, while I read the message," said Mr. Harbinger, slowly tearing the note open.

Walter wrote, "John Harbinger, 9:15 A.M.—"

"Good Heaven!" cried Mr. Harbinger, suddenly, at the same time dropping the telegram scroll on his lap.

"What is it, my dear?" exclaimed Mrs. H., seizing the paper ribbon quickly.

Walter handed the book to the servant, and bade him take it to the messenger.

Mrs. Harbinger, somewhat pale, and in a nervous voice, read as follows:

EXTON, Sept. 10, 186—8 o'clock, A.M.

TO JOHN HARBINGER, Esq., No. — street, Wyville—R. Gurley died suddenly at four o'clock this morning. Funeral on the 13th.

P. TROVER.

Then all three were silent for a few moments.

Mrs. Harbinger gazed and pale; Walter, ditto, and flushed; Mr. H. abstracted. Finally, "It was—very sudden," said Mrs. H., looking at Walter.

"Horribly sudden!" replied Walter, drawing a long breath, and looking furtively at Mr. H.

"For Gurley?" murmured Mr. Harbinger.

"I always thought—that is, I was always afraid he wasn't very strong, Eunice."

Mrs. H. made no answer, but in a moment, "Who is P. Trover?" she asked.

"A friend of Gurley's, a young lawyer," replied her husband.

Another interval of silence, while the breakfast was dispatched.

"Well," said Mr. Harbinger, at length, "if I hadn't altered my will, now, Eunice, Gurley would have altered his, and you see what the result would have been. I never believed he would—I mean, I feared he would not—outlive me, poor fellow! Of course I must go on at once."

"Of course," echoed Mrs. Harbinger, though in rather an embarrassed manner. Then, after a moment's thought, she added:

"And you had better go with Mr. Harbinger, Walter."

Walter looked at his mother, and immediately said:

"Yes, certainly, with the greatest pleasure—I mean, I am ready, of course, to be of any service."

"We will start by the noon train, Walter," said Mr. Harbinger, with melancholy alacrity.

And so it was settled.

The 12 M. train from Wyville up met the 11:30 A.M. train from Exton down, at Zedding station, where the leisurely interval of fifteen minutes was allowed for what the brakemen called "Re-freshments."

Emerging from the car at this spot, Mr. Harbinger, whose sorrow had not impaired his appetite, and Walter, who had no grief to speak of, pushed their way to the refreshment counter and sat down upon such viands as were within their reach.

In another instant, Mr. H., looking up, beheld a pair of eyes gazing at him from under a somewhat flushed brow, with a mixed expression of indignation and amusement.

The effect of this gaze upon his own face was instantaneous and remarkable. He became pale, then crimson; his hand trembled and dropped his fork; he started back from the counter, and exclaimed:

"Good God! Ge—ge—Gurley! N—n—not dead!"

"No more dead than yourself," replied that gentleman, in a testy voice, clapping his hand on his friend's shoulder.

"Fray, what the devil does this mean, sir?" and he snatched a small roll of paper from his pocket, and spread it under Mr. Harbinger's nose.

Mr. H. looked mechanically at it, and read:

WYVILLE, Sept. 10, 186—8:30 A.M.

ROBERT GURLEY, Esquire, No. 10 — street, Exton—died this morning at four o'clock, at a little after six this morning. Come on at once. EUNICE.

"I—I—can't imagine—" stammered Mr. Harbinger, looking vacantly at Walter.

"It is an infamous trick, John Harbinger!" cried Mr. Gurley.

At this moment, Walter placed a scrap of paper, just like the one in Mr. Gurley's hand, full in that gentleman's focus of vision, and, "Per-haps, sir," said he, with a smile, "you will also account for this in the same manner."

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"The rest of the journey was performed almost in silence, only broken by an occasional chuckle on the part of Mr. Gurley, or a passing remark on the landscape—which was not appreciated by the uncle—on the part of his niece.

They arrived in due time at home.

She is the best girl in the world, and you don't know half her good qualities, my dear mother, I assure you. I could write pages on pages about her, but I forbear. She hides me give you her dutiful love, and to say, that she hopes you will find her an affectionate daughter. As of course you will.

Gurley soon really pleased with the way things have turned out, and has said he should make his new will, at once, in favor of his dear Anna and her children. In this I believe him to be sincere, for he really loves his niece, and would be quite a good man, if he were not so selfish, and a little hypocritical.

I am sure you will approve of my choice, my dearest mother, and trust it will meet the approval of Mr. Harbinger. I shall be at home to-morrow night, D. Y. With all particulars. My darling Anna is waiting to ride to the post-office with me, so farewell, or rather, *au revoir*, and believe me your happy and loving son,

WALTER.

My story properly ends here, but I cannot refrain from adding a characteristic incident, which took place at the wedding of Walter and Anna Meldrick.

Just after the ceremony, Mr. Gurley and Mr. Harbinger went into the former gentleman's study together.

"John," said Mr. Gurley, "I have made a new will; but I have not yet burnt my old one. To do this, I waited until it could be done in your presence."

"How singular!" interrupted Mr. Harbinger. "I have had the very same idea myself, and therefore, I have—"

"Not burnt your will, either, eh?" queried Gurley, with great vivacity.

"No, but I was going to say that I have burnt it with me, as well as the new one, in order that we might, that is, that in case you—"

"Ah, yes, I see!" said Mr. Gurley, as Harbinger hesitated. "You still distrust me, John."

"Oh, no, Robert! but you said you knew—in short I fear that you rather distrust me, and—"

"Let us end the matter at once, John," interrupted Mr. Gurley, going to his writing-table.

"Here is my old will, and here is my new one—"

"And here are mine," said his friend, producing them from his coat-pocket.

"Into the fire goes No. 1," cried Mr. Gurley, suiting the action to the word.

"Ditto!" exclaimed Mr. H., imitating him.

"My new will leaves my whole fortune to Anna and her children," said Gurley, handing it to Harbinger.

"And mine gives everything, except my wife's portion to Walter," replied Mr. H., presenting the document to Gurley.

"Why not put them both in Trover's keeping?" said Mr. G.

"Why not in Plevin's?" asked Mr. H. (Plevin was Mr. H.'s lawyer).

"Trover is my particular friend," said Mr. Gurley.

"Is Plevin mine," echoed Mr. H.

"But it strikes me—" began Gurley.

"But it seems to me—" interrupted Harbinger.

After disputing for more than half an hour on this strange trifle, the matter ended by each gentleman resolving to retain personal possession of his own testament.

What the final result of this arrangement may be, I cannot foresee, as all parties are still living, and in a fair way to live for a tolerable number of years to come.

enter into the spirit of the scene, for it stood as firm and motionless as a rock, though its eyes shone brightly from beneath its shaggy forehead.

Dashing Ned drew rein with a cry, not of alarm but of surprise the most profound. And his gaze riveted upon that fair face, he sat his horse like one petrified.

"The pizen critters 'll git clean off, boss!" uttered Fred Meyer, in his eagerness. "Shell I clear the track?"

As he spoke the reckless old Ranger flung forward his rifle, though it may be doubted whether or no he would have put his suggestion into operation even if left alone, wrought up as his worst passions had been. But the strong hand of Dashing Ned grasped the rifle-barrel and with the same movement wrested it from the Ranger's grasp and hurled the weapon into the bushes. If nothing else Meyer's words were of service in arousing the captain.

Isola! Great heavens! what brings you here?"

Was it acting? Was Missouri Belle simply carrying out the plan she had confided to her father a few minutes before? Or was the white shade that chased the roses from her cheek beyond her control? What meant that wild, hunted look that told her eyes?

With a low cry she wheeled her mustang and disappeared amid the timber. As though moved by the same impulse Dashing Ned urged his horse forward, while the Rangers pressed close upon his heels. On at a reckless speed until the dense undergrowth grew thinner, finally giving place to a long narrow opening that apparently extended for miles both east and west.

As he broke through the brush, Dashing Ned, guided by his ear, saw Missouri Belle riding at full speed down this natural race-course, heading toward the east. A single glance showed him that the trail of the retreating Wolves led directly across the opening. For a brief space he hesitated. Duty bade him pursue the outlaw; but his heart opposed. Love and a sickening doubt urged him to overtake the fair fugitive; and love conquered.

"Wait here for me," he said, turning to his lieutenant and forcing himself to speak deliberately lest he should betray his great agitation. "That woman may have important information. I can capture her in a few minutes. Then we will run those Wolves down."

Without awaiting the reply, Dashing Ned gave his horse free rein and sped after the spotted mustang, who was bearing its mistress swiftly toward the morning sun. One backward glance the fugitive cast, then, devoted her every energy and rode as if the wind were behind her.

And right nobly the little mustang rewarded her efforts. Swift and hardy, it scarce seemed to feel the burden it bore, but brushed the dewdrops from the bending blades of grass with the long, low leaps of a hard-pressed antelope.

Dashing Ned used his spurs freely, but his horse had ridden long and hard, and there was not its wonted elasticity in its movements. A half-circle, half-groan parted the Ranger's lips as he saw that the paint-mustang was fairly holding its own.

His brain was in a wild confusion. He could scarce believe his eyes. And once he pinched his arm until the blood flowed, to convince himself that he was not dreaming.

A cold perspiration started from every pore as he saw that the spotted mustang was slowly but surely leaving him behind. He drew a pistol and half-leveled it, thinking to shoot the horse, but dared not trust his mustang's nerves. And then, at such speed, a fall from the saddle might well prove fatal to the woman.

The chase had covered but two miles, when the fugitive turned her mustang toward the southern timber. Dashing Ned took instant advantage of the angle, gaining several rods by the change. Straight on dashed Missouri Belle; but instead of entering the timber, she drew up beneath a low spreading live-oak tree and coolly faced her pursuer.

"Good-morning, Captain Conway! You appear to be in a hurry."

Dashing Ned wrenched up his horse, confused and abashed at this cool salutation. There was no look of terror now in those lustrous eyes, and the fair skin was only softly suffused, while a pleasant smile played around the red-ripe mouth.

"Isola, what does this mean? Why are you here?" he faltered, coming closer.

"Is not the prairie free for me as you, Captain Conway? I am as free as the wind, and in which you and your rough boys hunted me, I could almost doubt the fact. Do you always take a joke so seriously? Or did you mistake me for the Chaparral Wolf?"

"What could we think? That man and his murderous gang had but a few minutes before passed over this very trail. I cannot understand how you escaped meeting them. I can't make out how you came here; it is all a puzzle!"

"There are many enigmas in this world, and I am one of them. You have never understood me, from the very first. You believed me everything but what I was, and am. God help me! Had you only known—! Bah! what matter? It is all in a lifetime. And the young woman laughed; but there was far more of bitterness than merriment in the peal.

"I believed you all that was pure and good; I believe so still. I believe you were right, so, I loved you the first time we met, and that love has grown stronger and firmer every day and every hour since. You can say nothing that can alter that love, Isola, let the mystery which surrounds you, take its birth from what it will. I only ask you to be true."

"Ask nothing, Edward, for I have nothing to give you. I have been false to you from the first. I had a part given me to play, and I played it, caring little how you might suffer from it. Stop! something is urging me to tell the whole truth now, and I will. You must listen to me; I ask it by the love you swore to me."

"I will listen, Isola," said Conway, quietly. "But if you are testing the truth of my love, you are simply wasting time."

"No more! You are heaping coils of fire upon my head! Be still—let me say my say while I can command myself. I said that I had played you false from our first meeting, and I meant it. I did not like the part, but I was acting under orders from one whom I could not disobey. You remember, you remember, from two ruffians in San Antonio, one night. I was playing a part, then. That was a farce, by which I was to make your acquaintance and excite your interest at the same time. I told you I was Spanish. That my mother was dead, my father an invalid. I allowed you to accompany me home. You called again and again. You learned to love me—or what you believed me to be; and I—"

"Stop, Isola!" cried Dashing Ned, appealingly. "Don't say that—don't say you were playing a part, then!"

"I must," responded the young woman, averting her head. "I lied when I said that your love was returned."

"But why? If you did not love me, why did you lead me on to hope for such happiness? Or since you did, why not let me dream on! Why awaken me now?"

"Because I have grown sick of such constant deceit. No—I will be perfectly truthful with you now. That was not the whole reason. Since then—I have learned what it is to love. I can realize now the wrong I did you, and as the only amends I can make, I open your eyes to the truth. You do not ask me to love, and I thank you. It would pain me to refuse you anything more, and I could not tell you his name."

"I can guess, Isola. I have not forgotten that night at the Golden Harvest. You were masked, but I knew your voice too thoroughly to mistake."

"You knew—and you treated me as a stranger?"

"Was it so strange? I loved you; and so I trusted you. I felt sure that you would explain all in good time."

"Edward Conway, you are fortunate! Had I known you as well before—but never mind. The past is past."

"But may it not be recalled, Isola? You have known this Mark Bird but a few days. He can never love you as ardently as I. Give me another chance. I can—I will win your love, if I only have—"

"No, Edward; there is still another bar. I may love, but that is all. I could never disgrace an honest man by wedding him. I—the outlaw's daughter!"

"Isola!"

"Yes; I am the daughter of the man whom you call the Chaparral Wolf. It was to get at the secret of your plans against him that I made your acquaintance. Now go—but remember that I am not wholly to blame. I never knew a mother's care; and father—you can guess what his training was."

"Isola, I love you, even as his child. Marry me, and I will take you far away from this country—"

"I cannot desert my father," was the low, firm reply.

"Then I will dishonor my men and join him. You are all the world to me. I cannot give you up, Isola."

"You would do this—you!" faltered the girl. "And gladly—so that I have you? I will—"

"No, you must not. I am not worthy. And then—I love him. You must try and forget me. There are others."

The sounds of heavy firing came to their ears from a distance. Dashing Ned started like one awaking from a dream. He felt that his men had been drawn into an ambush!

CHAPTER XXI.

DOUBLE DAN IN BUSINESS.

In those first moments Double Dan was filled with a hatred as bloodthirsty and fierce as it was short-lived. He considered Colonel Overton as his own game, and looked upon the interference of the wayside assassin as a personal injury to himself. Thus when he uttered his yell and leaped forward, weapons in hand, the fallen man's nearest friend could not have been more thoroughly resolved to avenge his assassination than was the man who had for days been weaving a halter for his neck.

The assassin, with full speed, and seemed winged by fear, but there was one upon his track whose muscles of steel had more than once worn out stanch horses. Foot by foot the assassin was overhauled. A dozen times had Double Dan raised his revolver to end the chase by a shot, but as he drew his hand he hesitated. He knew not who might be lurking within earshot.

"They're more'n one way o' killin' a cat!" he muttered, as he shifted his grasp from the butt to the barrel of his heavy revolver, then hurried the weapon full as the flying figure with all the force of his sinewy arm.

Stricken fairly between the shoulders the fellow plunged heavily forward upon his head, and the next moment Double Dan alighted upon his back, both hands closing like a vise upon his throat.

There was little danger of resistance, as Double Dan was not slow to perceive. What with the blow, the solid fall upon his head, and the brief choking, the assassin was senseless, two-thirds dead. When convinced of this, Double Dan slipped off from the body, turning it over so that the face became visible. This was a mask of blood and dirt, which the spy lost no time in wiping away, using a handful of grass. Then, stooping low over the body, Double Dan struck a match and held it close to the face.

"Wad! I bet—durned!" he ejaculated, starting back in genuine amazement. "Ef that don't git me! whod'a' think it! the pizen cuss!"

Fairly overcome by the discovery he had made, Double Dan drew back, scratching his head as though in a quandary. This, however, did not last long. There was too much upon his hands for him to waste any time.

He bent over the body once more, this time to make sure that, though alive, his prize would not be liable to recover his senses too soon. Satisfied with his examination, Double Dan arose and trotted rapidly along the back trail, until he reached the spot where Colonel Overton had fallen. His horse was gone, but the half-breed still lay as he had dropped from the saddle. The stargate was strong enough for Double Dan to distinguish the blood that flowed over the half-breed's face, and he gazed at it with a belief that Overton had been shot through the brain, but a hasty examination proved otherwise. Though the will of the assassin had been good, his aim had failed, either from nervousness or some movement of his intended victim, and the ball had struck his scalp, above his temple.

Double Dan chuckled grimly as he discovered this. Though he hated Overton with all his heart, he would have grieved deeply at his death—provided another hand than his own dealt the blow.

For the second time Double Dan squatted down beside a senseless body, and vigorously scratched his bullet-head. Business was rushing. His hands were so full that he hardly knew which way to turn first. More than ever did he wish that the fellow's jacket was not so profusely studded, and tore it loose, together with a shred of cloth. He picked up the battered hat that lay near, and drew the long knife from his sheath. Bearing these in his hand he ran back to where Overton lay. The button he forced into the half-breed's closed hand. The hat he placed beside him; the knife he dropped a few feet away.

"Ef that don't do the business, then I don't want a cent!" and his double voice squeaked and rumbled in high glee. "When he wakes up, fust thing he'll say is 'I know whose money this is! He'll go fer 'git s'quar', an' right thar whar I'll pick up the trail agin. Good Lawd! ef any pizen critter picks up Double Dan fer a fool, he's goin' to git left, sure!"

Picking up Overton's hat, Double Dan hastened back to his other charge, eager to finish that part of the job. He pulled the hat firmly upon the man's head, then closely searched his pockets. In one of these he found the well-filled pocket-book so recently taken from Overton, together with several papers which had evidently come from the same source. Assuring himself that the money was within, Double Dan thrust all into his breast.

"Now ef the pizen critter'd only git up an' money home, I'd be all right. I'd spill all ef Overton was to wake up fust an' find him here."

Double Dan drew a small flask from his pocket and shook it regretfully. Evidently he deemed it a shame to waste good liquor on such an evil subject. And such a course had his drawbacks, besides.

"He ain't quite a fool. He'd want to know whar the licker come from. Good Lawd! the very thing! He'll be too bad skered to think o' lookin' fer Turn-over; I'll do it!"

Double Dan, nearly choking with merriment, poured a quantity of powder into the hollow of his hand and proceeded to make a "spit-ball" about the size of an egg. Into this he inserted a bit of punk, placing the whole in the right hand of the senseless assassin. Striking a match he ignited the punk, then hastily withdrew a few yards, lying down in the tall grass.

He was not kept long in suspense. The dampened powder caught fire and began spitting and spluttering at a great rate. The assassin stirred uneasily as the fire began to scorch him, and as the dryer powder inside the ball exploded with a vivid light, he sprang erect with a yell of mingled pain and terror. As Double Dan had foreseen, he was too greatly confused to realize what had occurred, but, guided by instinct, he took to his heels in blind terror, running away from him he knew not what.

"Ef I ain't too pizen smart to live!" gasped

Double Dan, almost suffocated with laughter. "Chain-lightnin' couldn't faze that critter! I reckon he thought he'd woke up in brimstone-land, sure enough!"

But Doubt the race was not yet finished. He drew his belt a notch tighter, and with one keen glance at the pole-star, started in a swift, steady run across the prairie. Despite the long distance he had already traveled upon foot since eating or sleeping, the scout ran as fresh and strongly, though fatigue was unknown to him. For hour after hour he maintained his pace, never faltering, not once pausing for breath. The man was one mass of tireless muscle. He had never met his equal, and to this day the curious can gather stories of his prowess, of his feats of foot and matchless endurance among the old stages of the Southwest. Double Dan is no fancy sketch.

The night was far spent when Double Dan's race was ended. He entered a dense clump of timber and undergrowth, pausing near its center, to utter a peculiar, long-drawn and quavering whistle. He listened for a reply, but none came. Twice he repeated the signal, then, with an exclamation of disgust, he advanced to what appeared to be a pile of brush and vines. Pulling a portion of the latter aside, he opened a small, stout door and entered a low, cunningly constructed cabin. Striking a match, he peered around him. The cabin bore traces of recent occupation. The light faded and Double Dan stood thinking. His disappointment was great. It was important that he should meet the owner of this secret cabin, yet he had scant time to lose.

"Mebbe he'll be in time, yit," he muttered. "I'll lay down an' ketch a couple o' two winks on the chance."

Curling up in a pile of dried grass and leaves, Double Dan fell asleep almost immediately. He possessed the rare faculty of awaking at just the minute he had determined upon beforehand, nor was this case an exception. Day was just dawning when he awoke. He was still alone. He cautiously stepped outside and whistled, but, as before, without any response. Re-entering the cabin he looked down at the jerked meat from a store that hung from the rafters and began eating.

"Ef I could only write!" he muttered, anxiously.

But Double Dan was not one long to despair. As usual a happy thought came to his aid. Grinning with delight he took down a buckskin shirt that hung upon the wall, and spread it out before him. Then, laying in a stock of cinders from the rude fireplace, he began painting his report.

First he drew what was intended for a man, but in a miraculously distorted position. Just above this was drawn a bird's head, with a snake in its mouth. To the right was a smaller figure with big eyes, a wonderful head of hair, and flowing skirts.

With his head upon one side, Double Dan eyed his work with complacent approval.

"It's clear as mud, ef I do say it! A blind man could see that that pizen critter is turnin' a summer, an' thar's Turn-over's totem—"

He paused abruptly and raised his eyes. The door was flung open, and a man's head entered. It was the face and head of Colonel Overton, the half-breed!

(To be continued—commenced in No. 448.)

Only a Tramp Printer.

BY FRANK DAVES.

He was only a tramp printer. He was probably twenty-five years of age, but looked older when he walked into the little town of Pottsville, one balmy spring morning, and applied at the Times office for a job.

I was "devil" in the Times office then, and was the only type about the establishment, as the proprietors and the printer's assistant had been seized with that peculiar longing to be on the road which only the true tramp knows, and had at once collected their wages and left town.

The proprietor offered each one an increase of two dollars on the week (two were not working by the thousand) if they would stay with him, but nothing would induce them to do so, and away they went.

Of course we needed a printer. Was the applicant a skillful workman?

He thought he was. I do not think in all my experience I ever saw a man throw type together as fast as this one did.

For the next week, to be able some day to set type like the fellow who was the height of my ambition. He was even a more important person in my eye than the editor.

There was a secret in our office, as there is in all country offices where the proprietors are not practical printers and where the men work by the week, namely: that there is very much less work to do in getting out the paper than the proprietors think there is. When Kirtley and Brown were in the office we always seemed to be at work, and were never ready to go to press until the very last hour, when, in fact, we were playing the same old game.

Shorty Cullum, as the new type called himself, worked swiftly, yet lazily, while I struggled along with my seven or eight sticks a day, and we were ready to go to press on time.

The proprietor was delighted. The proprietor thought that "Shorty" was an increase of five dollars on the week if he would work the office with only the assistance of the "devil."

"Shorty" heaved a deep sigh, and said he was a poor miserable tramp printer, standing very much in need of money, else he could not think of attempting such a task; yet under the circumstances he would try.

The proprietor hung some copy on the hook and went away delighted.

"Shorty" turned to me with one of his peculiar, painful smiles and said:

"Can you play checker?"

"Yes."

"Have you a deck?"

"Yes; why?"

"Because we will have a game to-morrow."

I was astonished, yet delighted. I turned to take one more adoring look at my partner before I began a new stick. He was sitting before his case perfectly straight, and to say that he was very swift would be putting the case too mildly. He seemed to compose whole words in a moment. While I struggled with spaces on a single line I would hear his rule click several times, each click announcing the beginning of a new line. Stickful after stickful he emptied; and when night came I never saw such another day's work put up by any other man.

The next day we played checker for two or three hours, and then layed the cards down and he began to spin long stories of his adventures.

He had worked in all the principal cities in the Union; had been a country editor; had for six months been a proof-reader in New York, at a salary of fifty dollars a week; was the author of a very popular work, published by a New York house; had an uncle in Boston worth a million dollars; and yet he was now a ragged, penniless tramp, just commencing work in a country office, in the very dust-laden little town in the world, at a salary of fifteen dollars per week.

Was I a friend of his? Was I confidential? Yes; of course I was.

Would I never reveal a secret?

Never.

"Then," said he, "I will tell you one." He leaned his head over as if to whisper. I listened breathlessly, for "Shorty's" secrets were very important ones to me.

"I am staying here because I love somebody in this town."

Would "Shorty" be so very kind as to tell me who?

Would I never tell anybody? Never!

"Jennie Morrison?"

"What, the editor's daughter?"

"Yes."

I was astonished at even "Shorty" aspiring for her hand, for she was not a perfect angel, and the belle of the town, and was she not as proud as a queen? And yet, I had no doubt of "Shorty's" worthiness, nor a doubt of his ability to impress her with his worth, and of course succeed in winning her for his own; for I could not understand how, in the course of human events, any one could intimately know "Shorty" and fail to love him.

That night I dreamed that "Shorty" and Jennie were married, and that I was a grown-up man and could set ten thousand a day, was foreman in the Times office, and "Shorty" was proprietor.

Week after week rolled away; and "Shorty" bought a new suit of clothes; and then he looked so handsome that half the girls in town began to admire him. I frequently heard them whisper, as he passed on the street, that the new printer was so very poetical and interesting. Hadn't he looked splendid every way?

I was in ecstasies. "I worshiped 'Shorty,'" and the most lavish praise of his personal appearance and mental abilities—yes, even the glowing adjectives of enthusiastic school-girls—failed to express my admiration of him.

I thought then it was because he was satisfied with feminine admiration, but I now remember that I never had anything to tell him about Jennie.

She seemed to be totally indifferent to him; and I soon began to dislike the girl because of this. I looked upon her with contempt. She was a gilded freak. Any young lady with good common sense and the most ordinary taste in the world would certainly appreciate "Shorty."

Hence, Jennie soon wilted under my contempt.

One evening I met her in a retired street, and she spoke kindly to me. My heart gave a great thump, for, much as I fancied that I disliked the girl, it required only one kind word from her lips to melt my susceptible boyish heart, and bring me to her feet, a very worshiper.

Suddenly she blushed scarlet, and drawing a note from her pocket, she said:

"Give this to Mr. Cullum, and don't say a word to any one about it; will you?"

"Yes, I will give it to him, and I will keep your secret if you are a friend of 'Shorty's.'"

"Who is 'Shorty'?"

"Mr. Cullum, my pard."

"Oh, yes; I am a friend of his—ever so good a friend."

I hurried off to "Shorty" with the note, and when he read it there was an expression on his face that spoke of heaven.

After that moment, "Shorty" seemed a new man. He walked as if on air, and seemed all the time a voyager in cloud-land.

A couple of weeks afterward I met the pair one moonlight night, walking slowly along the shore of the beautiful little lake that gives a romantic air to the otherwise melancholy aspect of Pottsville. They were talking very low, and the expression of "Shorty's" face spoke of supreme happiness within, and that of Jennie's spoke of childlike faith and trust.

I hurried away. I seemed to be intruding upon the privacy of angels.

A week after "Shorty" and Jennie were missing. The affair created immense excitement, and Mr. Morrison's indignation was sublime; but when, three days after, he learned that "Shorty's" uncle had been dead a month, and that his son-in-law was a millionaire, he began to reconsider the case. He sent for them to visit him, which they did, and when they returned to Boston I accompanied them, the trusted friend and petted ward of the Tramp Printer.

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THE PASSERS-BY.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

I watch upon the crowded street
To mark the crowds that hurry by,
Ah, in the faces that I meet
How much I read with earnest eye!

Here comes a man with hastening feet—
He is some hopeful mother's son;
He looks behind him glances fleet—
He is escaping from a dun.

And here's a man with eager eye,
And with a steady look before;
His feet seem nimble in life's race—
He is after him who is the over.

Here with a sachel one goes past;
What goal in life pursues him so?
What purpose grand, allurement vast?
The train that's gone some time ago!

Here comes a very cheerful man,
And o'er his face the glad smiles roam;
What pleasure on his face you see?
He has just got away from home.

There is one who wears a far-off gaze;
Of mundane things he's full of scorn;
His slow feet pick their thoughtful ways—
He has the luxury of a corn.

Who's this who comes with wrinkled brow,
And frowning brow, and dim-set jaw?
Quite heedless of the friends who bow?
He goes to meet his mother-in-law.

With long curled hair and step elate
And clothes well worn and figure tall
He hastens toward his fate—
A poet with an ode to fall.

This person loiters on the way;
He's not in haste; his step is slow;
He is going home if it takes all day;
His dinner's late—it's always so.

Come stand aside, let that man pass;
He dives promiscuously through the crowd;
What eagerness is in his face!
That free lunch sign is just hung out.

Look at this fellow with sad eye;
How languidly his limbs he moves
Unmindful of who pass him by!
A suffering victim of pure love!

With pinched-up visage, look most sour,
This man goes by with ancient coat,
To say a note due just this hour
Lest he should lose another goat.

My heart be still! There comes a girl!
Such loveliness you seldom see;
How doth it set my head in whirl—
But, there's my laundry looking for me!

Wild Western Tales.

JOHN LEE'S LAUNDRY.

A STORY OF THE MINES.

BY EDWARD L. WHEELER.

Poor Deadwood!
I often wonder that that city of the Black Hills has actual existence, after all the stories and novels that have been written of it, although many of them have embraced truthful scenes. To get the true idea, you need to either go in person, or get in with an "old resident" and have him give you a yarn. An old miner, back but a few weeks from the Hills, "got away with" the following narrative, and declared it to be true:

"Wal, yes, I've cum back ter the States, pilgrim, but not ter stay, no sir-ee! Ye see how it was, the old folks ar' gettin' purty well on toward ther shinin' shore, an' et struck me I'd best come visit 'em once agin afore it's their turn ter go on ther last minin' trip up ther Golden Stair."

"How long I bin away? Wal, let me see: et's nigh about—my wife Sally died an' I pulled out ther next year—wal, et's nigh about thirty year, stranger, since I went ther mines."

"I war even twenty-four, then, an' I cal'lated ther warn't many as could lick me, ef I did cum from ther States. I knocked about here and thar for twenty year; bin clean from Californy up ter ther Black Hills; tuk a hand in nearly every strike or minin'. I cum, an' bayr! I am, at ther age o' fifty-four, w'out as much as an old woman ter cumfert me, or a piece o' land ter call my own."

"Yes, I'm goin' back, o' course, arter I've had a visit w' ther old folks—they're eighty year old apiece, now—an' bid 'em good-by till I cum huntin' arter 'em in a new diggin'. E'll cum purty tough ter say good-by, w' ther realization that yer ain't a goin' ter see 'em agin in ther flesh; but, bizness ar' bizness, an' I'm goin' back ter ther Hills."

"Gold! Wal, yes. Thar's a supply o' ther article in them Hills as is goin' ter outlast you or I, pilgrim, for all thar ar' too many galoots thar ter ther squar' inch o' territory. Labor is cheap—a man ter work for a dollar an' half, or two dollars a day, out o' which he has ter pay for his board, an' he don't hev ter grumble about thar bein' ter many wittles, neither. I didn't do that way. I went a-huntin' on Sundays, an' layed in my own grub. Got a Chinaman ter cook it for me fer awhile, but found he tuk et on hisself to support a lull Chinese family out my larder, so I bounced him, you bet!"

"Chinamen—ar' thar memmy! Wal, ef I didn't know ye warn't ignorant, I shed lart at ye, fer such a question. Why, 'twixt you an' me, thar's one o' ther Celestials—every ten feet—almond-eye, pig-tail, an' all—fact, by gracious. We hev 'em thar o' all grades an' breeds; sum w' pig-tails, an' sum w'out; a great menny dishonest ones, an' a durned few thet's honest or ken be trusted."

"Speakin' o' ther galoots, reminds me o' John Lee, one o' ther cussedest o' cusses thet ever grow'd in them Hills. He war a dandy, war John, w' his pig-tail clipped off, an' sum real style in him, an' don't ye forget et. He wore as nobby clothes as any o' ther swells, an' a plug hat, diamond pin stuck into his b'iled shirt, an' patent leather boots onto his feet; in fac' he war a sorter nabob as well as any o' ther straight-eyed mortals."

"First I ever see'd o' him, he cum ter Gray's diggin's, last year, leashed a chunk o' ground cuss agin' ther mountain base, an' hired a gang o' men ter stick him up a shanty. Then he stuck out his sign, and we were apprihed of ther fact that John Lee war a laundryman. But he didn't do ther scrubbin', not any fer Johnny! He hired several almond-eyed women ter do ther work, w' he set at his desk w' one pen ahind his ear an' one w' in his grasp, an' drew portraits o' ther fair maidens o' his native clime."

"A gang o' us, w' Bill Ackley at our head, used ter often go over an' spend an evenin' in ther offis o' ther laundry, whar John would set an' entertain us w' yarns an' drawin's, such as would puzzle an American, fer no fool war thet same John, an' you bet yer pile on't."

"One story he used to tell tickled Bill Ackley fer to kill. Bill war a tough customer, allus grim an' gloomy, an' et tuk a Chinaman ter fetch out his humor."

"Chine man used to go see Melican gal, downee San Frisco? John would say, w' a chuckle; 'Chine man muchee rich; Melican gal muchee poor. Chine man used to eattee up allee Melican gal's pies, an' cakee, an' meats—Melican gal's father gottee muchee madee, an' comee for Chine man with swordee. Chine mannee run aroundee room, an' makee Melican man muchee madder; he cattee Chine man by cue an' cuttee off, so Chine man no go back to China. Chine man den stealtee five shirts from Melican man, an' got muchee even."

"All ther p'int seemed ter be that the durned almond-eyed galoot keered more for the five shirts than he did for the cue, or pig-tail."

"About ther time o' John Lee's startin' in bizness, a gang o' road-agents got bold an' darin' in ther neighborhood o' ther diggin's, an' we suffered robbery an' attacks till thar warn't no vartue in forbearance, an' we organized fer a campaign. We tho't we knowed jest whar ter lay our hands on ther cusses, an' we had et right in us ter lick 'em or die a-fightin', you bet! As

we passed John Lee's laundry on our way in s'arch o' ther galoots, Bill Ackley had us stop an' he called ther Celestial out, and invited him along w' us, fer he war a primo favorite, war John Lee.

"But the almond-eyed galoot shuk his head, an' he sez, sez he:

"'Note any fightee for Chine man; he stay an' washee Melican man's shirtee for ten centee; Melican man he go hunt for agents, loseee day's work, an' gettee much he fooler, allee same!'

"An', d'ye b'liev, the pilgrim we cumm'n' hire thet galoot ter go along w' us; he war as obstinate as any old mule ye ever see'd, an' no mistake. So we started on w'out him, w' nigh about all ther fightin' men o' ther town along w' us."

"We war bound fer a victory, war we."

"But nary an agent did we lay our eyes on thet day, and w'en we got back ter ther diggin's we found thet them cusses had bin thar from another direction, an' gone thru ther town, appropriatin' all thet war vallyable—gold, wittles, an' such as they could carry."

"Arter thet we war purty desprit, an' I reckon we hedn't many religious feelin's fer ther road-agents. They war allus led by a masked chap in black whom we got ter callin' Night-Bird, an' war a hard gang ter tackle, but we laid low fer 'em."

"One night I an' Bill Ackley war settin' in ther laundry offis, chattin' w' John Lee, when a rough-lookin' customer entered, an' passed thru inter a rear part o' ther buildin', slamm'n' a door behind him. We see'd John Lee scowl, an' Bill sez, sez he:

"'Who war thet chap, Celestial?'

"'Melican man who lodgee up-stairs; Chine man no like him muchee, replied ther pig-tailed galoot. Even then we didn't suspect anythin', pilgrim, but we got our eyes opened, arter awhile."

"It was proposed that we all go off on another road-agent hunt, an' cum back arter a little while, an' see ef we couldn't surprise ther galoots. So we mustered all ther men, an' rid out, no one ther wiser o' our plans 'cept them as war along."

"We rid out o' town about a mile, an' then rid back, lickety scoot, an' stranger, we caught them agents all collected afoot in ther center o' ther street, an' charged on 'em, w' Bill Ackley at our head—he war a fearless, venturesome cuss war Bill, too."

"Well, seem' they couldn't escape by runnin', the road-agents fired on us, an' stood ther ground, till by an overplus o' men, we finished 'em up, till not a man war left."

"Poor Bill Ackley went down in ther scrimmage, an' died w'out speakin' arter he war shot. Close by him he fell ther leader o' ther road-robbies, an' pilgrim, w'en we pulled off his mask, who d'ye s'pose we found?"

"Give et up? Wal, sir, et warn't no one else than thet cussed dandy laundryman, John Lee! Yes, sir-ee, him an' no one else; an' thar the almond-eyed galoot had bin hidin' as all ther time w' his yarns an' such. We war horrified; such a development in Chine devility had never struck ther diggin's o' Gray's. Later, our suspicions led us ter search John Lee's laundry, which war built w' ther hind end up agin' a bluff o' rock, an' here another discovery awaited us, miners, who had been so sucked in on one Chinese galoot."

"Openin' out o' ther back end o' ther laundry a cavern had bin bored inter ther mountain, havin' an' out on t'other side, an' this bin the head-quarters o' ther outlaws, an' heer we found much o' what we'd frum time ter time bin robbed of. An' lucky it war fer thet Chine galoot thet a friendly bullet tuk him off jest as et did, or thar'd bin a raisin' (ter a limb) in short order, you bet."

Puritan Prissie.

A Tale of Roundheads and Cavaliers.

BY T. C. HARBAUGH.

THE ax which fell upon the neck of the unfortunate Charles Stuart before Whitehall did not bring peace and security to England. The clashing of swords still echoed throughout the new Commonwealth, the "fug of war" came whenever doughty Puritan met valiant Cavalier, and meet they did upon more occasions than one.

There were several parts of the country where the followers of the king for a long time kept the ascendancy, despite the stern vigilance of the Roundheads. Under several gallant young nobles, upon whose heads the Cromwell parliament had set no insignificant price, they continued the war with relentless fury, being determined to oppose the usurper, as Oliver was termed, to the bitter end.

Men, and even women, of Puritan proclivities were hunted like wild beasts in these districts; and the terrors of a *La Vendee* kept the country in a state of constant excitement and alarm.

On the borders of a large forest of oaks whose shade gracefully fell upon the bosom of the Severn, stood a grand old house which, as a relic of a reign glorious in English history, was venerated by every one. At the time of which we write, it was the home of a family named Maxton, whose sympathies, as was well known, were enlisted in the cause of Cromwell.

Hubert, the head of the house, occupied a seat in the new parliament, where he was celebrated for his wise counsels, and bitter Roundhead speeches. At home remained his wife, a devout invalid, and his only living child, a daughter named Priscilla. A son had fallen at Cromwell's side at Naseby.

Priscilla, or Prissie, as the tall and beautiful Puritan girl was called, was not known to pos-

sess a lover. Her sole care seemed to be devotion to the bedridden mother. Occasionally she was seen in company with a girl several years her junior, the child of a Roundhead family which had suffered terribly at the hands of the king's men.

Genia Monk, the young creature just mentioned, was fierce and outspoken against the Cavaliers; and though Prissie Maxton believed that she had betrayed their retreats to Old Ironsides' merciless troopers, she did not upbraid the girl.

At last Genia became a hunted person. She was forced to fly from her home, which the king's men laid in ashes. From place to place they hunted the fair girl; they wanted the blood of the young person who had guided the Puritan troopers to their bivouacs. They rode up and down the country, ransacking Puritan houses for their prey, insulting women and committing all manner of indignities on the defenseless, who did not know the whereabouts of Genia Monk.

The sanctuary of worship did not escape; they battered down the door before the frightened sexton could produce the keys, and, notwithstanding the protestations of denial, they overturned the altar in their mad hunt for Genia.

One night in the fall of the year when the great oaks before Maxton House were shedding their russet leaves, Prissie sat before the bed on which her mother reclined, reading from the book of psalms, that food and comfort for the famished and the weary. A lamp burned on the stand at the girl's elbow, and revealed the wan-faced old lady apparently asleep on the bed.

All at once a sound like a wall started the reader, and she looked toward the door. In the moment of silence that followed she heard her own name:

"Prissie! Prissie! the wolves are hard upon my track!"

There was no mistaking the cry; the Puritan girl closed the book and with a glance which told her that her mother had fallen to sleep, she glided into the hall and thence to the great door.

Putting her ear to the lock, she listened. The wind was rising without; the oaks were crashing together like rival halberds, and the cold air came in and chilled her cheek.



"Begone!" cried Prissie, looking sternly at the men.

"No help! Oh, Heaven, pity poor Genia Monk, when the doors of Maxton House are shut against her!"

These words, in a woman's despairing tones, fell suddenly upon Prissie's ears as she listened at the keyhole.

Then she sprung erect; the heavy key, worn at her girdle, grated in the lock, and as the portal opened, the figure of a woman fell into her arms.

"Safe!" cried a voice, now couched in accents of joy. "Oh, Prissie, I did not intend to imperil you; but they followed me so swiftly that I could not turn aside."

"God sent you to me, Genia," was the answer. "Why, you are cold and wet."

"I have been running through the long grass on the moor, and it is damp. They carry torches, Prissie, and I heard the jingling of their swords all the time."

The drenched clothes of the hunted woman sent a chill to Prissie Maxton's heart; but she lifted the trembling figure from the door, and bore it into a dark place which was soon announced as a large chamber.

"I will strike a light, Genia," the Roundhead's daughter said. "Do you stand still while I hunt the lamp."

Dropping the hand which had come to Maxton house for safety, Prissie started to find the lamp; but she had not proceeded five feet before a flash of light fell upon the floor at her very feet.

"Mercy! They come!" cried the hunted girl. "Even over the threshold of your home, Prissie, they follow me."

The white-faced speaker was at Priscilla Maxton's side, and grasping her hand, she sunk exhausted upon the floor. The terrors through which Genia Monk had passed during the last fortnight, had almost unsettled her mind. She had lost the bloom of health and beauty which had made her famous almost to the steps of the palace, and now she looked the ghostly, hunted thing that she was.

But Prissie Prissie exhibited no signs of fear as she turned toward the door which, in the hurry of the moment, she had left open. The outer portal could not be barred against the Cavaliers now; they were in the hall; the glare of their torches was illuminating the room in which the girls awaited them. Prissie heard the clash of their swords and their hard, soldier-like oaths.

Spoken a torch was thrust into the room, and then its owner, a fierce, bare-headed Cavalier, with a naked sword, sprung across the threshold. He was immediately followed by two companions as ferocious-looking as himself, and all halted abruptly and stared at the sight that met their gaze.

The nickname of "Blacksocks" fell from Priscilla's lips as she looked at the two whose eyes were fastened on her, while the fire of rage leaped and danced in their evil depths.

"Ho! ho! the witch has taken shelter in Maxton House, comrades!" suddenly cried one of the men. "By my lady's troth! I have entered a rich place."

"Begone!" cried Prissie, looking sternly at the men. "Begone! you have no right to invade these premises. This roof shelters all who fly to it for safety, and the creature, hunted by your naked blades, shall find the protection she seeks beneath it."

There was something in the looks and tones of Puritan Prissie that made the three Blacksocks exchange significant looks; but the leader, and he who had spoken first, broke forth again: "Pray, who will protect her?" he cried. "Do not provoke us, old Maxton's daughter, else

your groaning mother'll be turned out of doors, and our torches be thrown into her bed. We want the witch who kneels at your side. Give her up, and we will ride away with no harm done to Maxton House."

Give Genia Monk over to the men who had hunted her over moor and through brakes like bloodhounds for a fortnight, which had seemed to her a year?

It did not take Puritan Prissie a moment to decide.

"Give her up and save the house in which two kings were born!" came the throatful cry.

"In a moment you shall have my answer!" was the maiden's reply.

"Be it a brief one! We cannot tarry here till dawn!"

Pressing Genia's hand and bidding her in a low tone to rise, Prissie led her quickly to the wall. The next moment she touched a secret spring, and the panel flew open, displaying a dark corridor to the gaze of all.

"Into the dark, sister! never fear!" Prissie Maxton said, in a whisper to Genia, whom, half resisting, she thrust forward, and the panel came back to tell the king's men that their victim had disappeared.

They darted forward with yells of baffled rage; but found themselves confronted by Puritan Prissie who now held a long broadsword in her hands. This weapon, revealed by the opening of the panel, she had snatched from its hook, and now its bright blade, undimmed by rust, flashed in the faces of the astonished Cavaliers.

They stopped before the well-armed girl, and shrunk back as she sprung forward, her nature aroused, and a gleam of battle in her dark eyes.

"Get ye hence!" she shouted. "Do you think that I will give into your hands the dove nurtured through brake and glen by the hawks! Maxton House is not unprepared for such demons as the Blacksocks, led on by that good-for-nothing Rupert, whom Oliver Ironsides will catch some day. Take your unholy feet from Maxton House, lest the sword which my brother wielded at Naseby cleave your brainless skulls!"

The late hunters of Genia Monk stayed not upon the order of their going, but rushed into the hall.

There, for a moment, they showed signs of standing.

or compass. With my gun, a blanket, a flask and some other rascals, I made my way northward across lots without any regard to roads, trails or landmarks. You see I'd a pretty good opinion o' my bump of navigation. Wherever night overtook me I wrapped my blanket round me and layed down to pleasant dreams, and slept as sweetly as a b'ar in his winter hibernation."

"But, one day, while on this journey, a snow-storm set in, and when night came on I looked around for a better bed than I'd been used to. I found a great hollow log that just suited me to a gnat's eye. It war w' open at one end and nighly closed at the other. Into this lowly domicile I dragged my weary length, and snuggled down for a quiet rest, while the icy fingers of the storm wove its shroud of white over the dead year, as the poet says."

"Wal, I hadn't laid thar long when I heard a peculiar noise that sounded like the 'skirr-r-r' of a rattlesnake; but, great Cessars! I knowed a rattler couldn't be out in that season of the year. With this assurance I convinced myself it war the wind outside with its whistle choked by the fallin' snow. But I soon had reason to change my mind, for presently I heard the same sound agin, accompanied by a movement in the log. I raised my eyes, and, great Valley of Shadow! thar, before me, I beheld two dail, glowin' orbs of fire that seemed to dart rays of diabolical enchantment into my very soul! Then I knowed what made that strange noise. It war the purring of a panther—a real, live, vicious, man-eatin' panther."

"I tell ye what, boys, my blood run cold as the winter blast beatin' around me, and my old heart thumped against that log until I war afraid it would participate the panther on the me; and, in that case, it would be 'good-by, Nathaniel Thorne.' Couldn't I shoot it? No, I was so cramped up in that log that I couldn't draw my gun, or pistol, either; and I knew the daisy before me well enough to know that he'd take the first movement on my part for a challenge and wade in me. I was lost! Thar I lay, boys, my only bolts lay in keepin' still and lookin' thar brute out o' countenance; and while doin' this, it suddenly occurred to me that the panther must wade over me to git out o' the log. As thar war a foot over six or eight inches between my back and the top of the log, I see'd thar war a chance for some desperate fun afore both of us got out."

"But what has this to do with editors?" I asked, impatiently.

"Keep your peace," replied Natty. "and I'll fix that. You see, that panther had me whar the hair was short, and I'd begun to think 'bout squarin' up my earthly account with my conscience, when suddenly I heard a voice exclaim, 'Oh Lord!' in a despairin' sort of a way. I listened, and, true as I live, I discovered that some poor human wretch was outside in the storm at the panther's end of the log. I listened, and learned by his own words that he war lost in the storm, and seemed to be perishin'. I heard him talkin' away, but as thar was no response, I discovered he war talkin' to himself. And I discovered, also, that he was in a fair way o' passin' in his checks. He tried to light a fire in the panther end of the log, but the wind put it out every time he tried. He was left the match. Then the man would swear in as smooth, graceful and yet despairin' language as I ever hearn in my life. Ah! but he war a glib-tongued feller, but of a very, very sinful nature!"

"This is my last match," I finally heard him say; and he struck it, and there in the midst of the mountains, under the deep shadows of night, in a howling storm, the match flared up and—then went out! Oh! such an unorthodox wail of agony as was wrung from the man's fallen lips—a wail that the storm mocked with demonic glee, while the wind dashed a cloud of snow into his face and eyes as if with cruel spite."

This is the end of all my earthly hopes and ambition, I then heard him say, and then he went on to prepare himself to die. He fast made a confession of his sins and it war as long as the moral law. I thought he'd confess himself to death. He told some things that made the flesh creep on my bones, but he told it all in a very easy, graceful way that showed he war used to it. He told some things that'd shock a wooden man, but finally he rounded off with a self-satisfied 'thar now,' as though the wretch was over with. Done with his confessions, he went to prayin', and I see'd at once he'd tackled a stranger. He couldn't handle his words on a prayer like he could on a confession, and so he labored along kind o' heavy and clumsy. I know he'd never done the like afore, and the joke of it war, whenever a gust of wind'd bounce a puff o' snow into his face, he'd rip out an oath—catch himself—ask pardon, and then go on with his foreign subject. Suddenly a thought seemed to have occurred to him, and he snatched off a snuff in an awful scurrying hurry. The fact of it is, he'd found another match, and strike in it he dashed a handful of gunpowder on the blaze, he did, by Judas!

"Great gallinippers! there was a puff, an oath, a growl, and me and the panther were blown half out o' the log; whar that dyin' snuff landed I don't know, nor didn't keer at that time, for I supposed the panther'd salivate me without further delay; but, please gracious, it didn't. The man, howsoever, I'd been successful. The dry, dotted wood on the inside of the log caught fire, and a perfect chunk of black smoke come a-rollin' down that log. The panther, I could see, lay 'bout the same distance from me, but the fire was eatin' down to'rds his tail pretty fast. The climax I've reached, and I'm ready to brace myself for the ordeal. Just then the man outside begun singin' a song o' praise, the panther begun to growl, the fire to crackle—all in strange symphony with the sullen moan of the wind in the mountains."

"Suddenly there was a fearful scratching in the log; a cloud passed over my vision; the panther sprung forward with scorched tail and—blast if he didn't wade right over me, cleared the log and confronted the songster outside. Quick as wink I hatched out a plan. I took a nail smoke-stack, cleared my lungs and eyes and peered over the log. And there they were, the panther and the songster, eyin' each other like a pair o' sphinxes."

"The man's song had died on his parted lips that seemed frozen where the last word'd lie. He was an elderly-lookin' man, with stubby, iron-gray whiskers, heavy brows and gray eyes."

"The panther lay lashin' his tail ready for a leap, but before it was made I put a bullet through the critter's head and it rolled over a lifeless. Then I riz up, and in the dim glow of the burnin' log I bowed smilin'ly to that child of the storm. He coughed, rubbed his bearded throat, snapped his eyes a few times as if in doubt, then said, in a trembly, husky tone:

"'Stranger, good-evening. We're havin' quite a skiff of snow.'"

"'Yes, I responded, 'seems to me you war in close quarters.'"

"'Oh, yes, thank you, sir,' he replied, and then he turned his back to the fire, spread out his hands under his coat-tail, and talked like an old hunter—wonderin' every once in awhile who'd been counted in. Hayes or Tilden."

"He told me he war lost from his camp, how he'd lit a fire and scared the panther out o' the log, but never a word was said 'bout his long confession and his wrastle in prayer. But after he'd taken a nerve or two out of my flask, and got his bearings, his tongue limbered up, and in less'n an hour I thought I'd never run across a jollier feller in all my travels. He said he war an editor by profession, that his home was in the Fair Field of Iowa, and that his name was Washington Wappelo Junkin, and that he and some friends war out on a leetle huntin' excursion in Colorado as a recreation."

"And now, boys, you know exactly why I've a reverence for that kind o' men, for I verily believe I war saved from that panther's fury by that same genial Washington Wappelo."

We reflected when the guide had concluded his story. It seemed to us that we had heard the story of Mr. J. being lost before, but never with the variations Natty Thorne had given it.

Old Natty Thorne's Adventure.

BY OLL COOMES.

SUFFER was over with after a hard day's tramp among the hills of Colorado, and we were lounging about our camp-fire, smoking and talking over our day's hunt. In summing up the whole, it was voted a failure, with the exception of the practical joke that the boys had perpetrated upon our editorial friend, Jackson, and in endeavoring to exonerate himself, our guide, Natty Thorne, took sides with him (Jackson). In explanation as to why he did so, he told the following enjoyable story:

"I have a kind o' reverence for fellers as what make newspapers, and I'll tell ye how it comes. The first time I set foot in Colorado was durin' the winter of eighteen-seventy-five. I war hoodin' it from Denver to E—, without guide